GUIDE FOR FULL EXEGESIS

Initial Steps

1. Survey the historical context in general - read or reread in a general introduction to the Bible or a history of the period about the specific period which covers the passage to be preached.

   a. Read the entire document through in one sitting.
   b. Check your observations against the secondary literature.

2. Confirm the limits of the passage - is it the whole passage, a piece of the passage, the beginning, the ending?

3. Establish the text.

4. Make your own translation from the original language if you read that language. If not, check the passage in an interlinear.

5. Analyze sentence structures and syntactical relationships -- Make sure you know who's doing what to whom, and exactly what is going on.

6. Analyze the grammar.

7. Analyze significant words - Look up any unfamiliar words, check meanings in a lexicon of Hebrew or Greek words. Often the translator is not telling the whole story, and sometimes the translation may be misleading.

8. Research the historical-cultural background. Set the passage, in your mind at least, in the historical-cultural setting. What led up to this piece of scripture.

9. Consider the broader Biblical and theological contexts. How does the rest of the Bible use this passage? How does the church qua church ordinarily use this passage?

10. Accumulate a bibliography of secondary sources and read widely.

    a. Investigate what others have said about the passage.
    b. Compare and adjust.
    c. Apply your discoveries throughout your sermon.
    d. Know when to quote.
    e. Admit when it is your own interpretation.

11. For Gospel passages, set it in the context of Jesus' life.

12. Decide on your opening and your closing.

13. Decide on the meaning of the passage that you want to use for this sermon.

14. Make sure, if you have a written sermon, that it is annotated. Where did you get your information? What author said what?

AIDS AND RESOURCES IN EXEGESIS

1. Have a variety of translations.

   King James — New International Version
   Revised Standard — New Revised Standard
   New American — Jerusalem Bible
   New American Standard

   a. Make sure it is a translation, not a paraphrase. The Living Bible is a paraphrase, use it only when you specifically mean to use a paraphrase for its special understanding. Another paraphrase is the Expanded Bible.

   A parallel Bible is an interesting thing to own. It may have four or more translations in one book.

   Try to know the history of the Bible you are using. Who produced it? When? To meet what need? Is the translation accurate and up-to-date? Is the translation broad theologically (some are not)?

2. Have at least one interlinear if you do not read the original languages.

   Special interest New Testaments or parts of New Testaments are the Word for Us (inclusive language texts of John and Mark, Galatians and Romans) and The Cotton Patch New Testament (written in U.S. Southern dialect).

3. Have a good one-volume commentary. The Jerome is excellent.

4. Have commentaries on the major books of the bible. Some excellent commentaries are:

   The Anchor Bible — Interpretation
   Hermenaeia — The Interpreter's Bible

   A new edition of the Interpreters is going to be on the market next year. You can choose now to save money and buy the old set marked down (still very usable) or wait a year and have a very up to date commentary. Anchor is still being written, and new volumes appear from time to time. Anchor is interfaith -- written by Catholics, Jews, Orthodox, and Protestants. Hermenaeia is still being written and new volumes appear from time to time. It is very scholarly and written (like Anchor) by some of the foremost Biblical scholars alive.

   An excellent commentary for lay use is The Daily Study Bible Series (Barclay). While having a wealth of information about the cultural and historical background, it is easy to read.

5. Have a good introduction to the Bible or historical overview of the Bible. In order of difficulty, the following are examples:

Hayes, John: Introduction to the Bible, Westminster Press, Phila. 1971. (Excellent for laity and beginners.)
Anderson, Bernhard: Understanding the Old Testament, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1975 (standard seminary text).
Kee, Howard, Franklin Young and Karlfried Froehlich: Understanding the New Testament, Prentice Hall, etc. (companion to the above).
Bright, John: A History of Israel, Westminster Press, Phila, 1972.

6. Have a good cultural overview of the Bible. An example is:

de Vaux, Roland: Ancient Israel; Volume 1 - Social Institutions; Volume 2 - Religious Institutions.

7. Begin to collect good secondary sources like:

Trible, Phyllis: God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality (female imagery for God in the Bible)
Trible, Phyllis: Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives. Both are published by Fortress Press, Phil.
Brown, Raymond: The Community of the Beloved Disciple and The Churches the Disciples Left Behind. Both are from Paulist Press, 1979 and 1984.
Weems, Renita J.: Just a Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible. LuraMedia, San Diego, 1988.

8. Collect books about preaching

Gonzalez, Justo and Catherine: Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed. (handout)
Achtemeier, Elizabeth: Creative Preaching, Finding the Words. Both are from the Abingdon Preacher's Library. Achtemeier is/was editor of the Woman's Pulpit.
Smith, Christine M. Weaving the Sermon: Preaching in a Feminist Perspective. Westminster/John Knox, Louisville, Ky. 1989.

9. Collect Sermons

Farmer, David A and Edwina Hunter: And Blessed is She: Sermons by Women. (handout)
Spinning a Sacred Yarn: Women Speak from the Pulpit Pilgrim Press, 1982

10. Own a copy of the Lectionary, and begin to collect the workbooks on preaching the lectionary. They have a wealth of ideas. (John Brokhoff has an excellent series.)

7

The Scriptural Qualifications of Deacons

The qualifications of a deacon may be drawn from two passages in the New Testament. The establishment of the ministry of deacons as recorded in Acts chapter six provides a partial list of qualifications for this office.

> *But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. (Acts 6:3)*

The deacon, like the elder, must be a man with a good reputation not only in the church but in the community as well. The duties of his office call for the highest level of confidence. As a very important lay leader the deacon should have the trust of the membership.

The apostles agreed that the deacons selected from the fellowship should be Spirit-filled men. Though their ministry was largely the administration of material things, Spirit-filled men were essential for the oversight of this task. The work assigned the deacons was an integral part of the church's overall ministry.

No dichotomy exists between the spiritual and the material ministries of the church. The deacons elected to wait tables in the household of faith are as much in need of the fulness of the Holy Spirit as the elders who minister the Word.

The infilling of the Holy Spirit is just as essential for service as He is for holy living. Christians so often experience futility in their efforts at service in most instances because of the absence of anointing for service. The norm for every Christian is to be Spirit-filled.

The third characteristic of good deacons given by the apostles was wisdom. The deacon was assigned to an important task

requiring him not only to serve himself but to enlist and oversee others in the accomplishment of the task. The deacons were called upon frequently to make decisions and to deal with the problems of people. The deacon must be wise in the sense that he has developed the skill of applying his knowledge in a given situation. He should be a man of good judgment.

As the church grew and spread beyond Palestine to the Gentiles the office of deacon became more important in the life of the church. When Paul instructed Timothy in matters of church order he advised him to have deacons in the churches. Paul's instructions included a guideline of qualifications to assure spiritual leadership in the office of deacon comparable to the standards for the office of elder.

> *Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain,*
> *but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.*
> *And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. . . .*
> *Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*
> *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12-13)*

The similarities as well as the differences of the qualifications of deacons.to that of elders are important. Three qualities of a deacon are exactly like the qualities of eldership.

The deacon's home life is very important. He must have a solid marriage that meets scriptural standards. He must also have a well-ordered home. His children should reflect in their conduct the Christian atmosphere of the home. The support of a godly wife is certainly implied in this passage.

With the widespread need to strengthen the family this requisite for leadership should not be taken lightly by any church.

The deacon like the elder is not to be addicted to wine. The collective judgment of our fellowship from its inception until now is that believers should not use any form of alcoholic beverages. Since alcoholism is now the most threatening form

of drug abuse in western society the Christian community must refrain all the more from the use of alcoholic beverages. The deacons and the elders must provide a wholesome example by their own abstinence.

The financial practices of a candidate for the office of deacon ought not to be overlooked. The scriptures say that he is not to "be fond of sordid gain." The word *sordid* infers a shameful or dishonest gain. When one's love for money and material things is so overpowering that he is willing to compromise Christian principles to get money he is not qualified for church leadership. The deacon like the elder should be above reproach in financial matters. He should have a Spirit-given capacity to use his possessions as a stewardship for the glory of Christ. The way a man handles money is the key to his whole value system. An officer of the church who has responsibility for an important share of the finances should have a deep commitment to the values set forth in the gospel. He not only has responsibility to account for the fund, but he must by his own attitude toward money lead the church to the sanctified management of its resources.

Paul speaks not only of the characteristics of deacons that are similar to those of the elders, but he adds some characteristics not found in the list for elders. Paul advises Timothy that men of dignity should be selected for the *diaconate*. The image of the deacon should be one that commands respect. A deacon must deal with all kinds and all ages of people in the course of his duties. As a servant of Christ his bearing should enable him to minister to all.

The idea of dignity is somewhat tarnished in modern culture. So many leaders in high places have failed that cynicism has taken over in the populous. The unfortunate result of this situation is the immortalization of the undignified. The church is obligated to counter such fuzzy thinking and reassert the credibility of dignity. It is needed in the home, in the government, and in the church. Holy Spirit-implanted dignity is a quality of Christian character.

The person selected to serve as a deacon should be in control not only of his walk but also of his talk. In this ministry the deacon will be in constant contact with people in their homes, making him aware of problems that should never be discussed outside one's secret prayer closet. Careless talk damages the

work and the reputation of fellow believers. It is significant that this quality be singled out and emphasized in the instruction for deacons, and that he be encouraged to strictly adhere to this. It is a quality that should be emulated by elders and by every Christian. It is especially important that deacons avoid a double-tongue (1 Tim. 3:8). The Greek word translated *double-tongue* carries the connotation of talebearing. The seriousness of this sin can be more readily understood by comparing Proverbs 11:13 with 1 Timothy 3:8:

> *He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter. (Prov. 11:13)*
> *Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain. (1 Tim. 3:8)*

The control of the tongue is a necessity to the deacon's ministry of compassion and understanding. Only the trustworthy can visit from house to house and enjoy the high privilege of such direct exposure to the weaknesses and faults of the saints. The deacon, and for that matter any leader, can minister only to those who trust him.

The office of deacon requires not only qualities of Christian character; it also requires a deep knowledge of the things of God. Paul says,

> *But holding to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. (1 Tim. 3:9)*

The mystery of faith speaks of an objective faith, the content of faith. These servants of the church must have more than an ordinary understanding of that body of truth which constitutes the gospel. Deacons should be men who know and love the Word of God. The great doctrines of the Bible are their spiritual sustenance. Deacons are to minister truth with compassion.

This office, like that of the elder, is not for the novice; it requires maturity. Paul instructed Timothy that deacons were to be "tested."

> *And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. (1 Tim. 3:10)*

Paul's use of the present imperative suggests that the testing of the man should be over a period of time. Some have erroneously concluded that deacons should have a probation period after their election to office. Paul is not suggesting a probation; he is calling for care in the selection of the deacons. Only those who have proven themselves should be considered for the office. R. C. H. Lenski, a Lutheran scholar, supports this position by calling attention to the kind of men selected in Acts six for the *diaconate*. They were tried and proven men, selected from the very best to serve as deacons.

The office of deacon should never be used as a ploy to entice some inactive member into ministry. The deacons are to come from those already active in ministry.

> *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:13)*

A distinction must be made in this verse between the technical and non-technical use of the word *deacon*. Paul is saying that those selected for the office of deacon should be men who have already served the church well by their unofficial ministry. Faithful service is the most likely way for a promising leader to come to the attention of his brethren. The New International Version seems a better translation of this verse.

> *Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:13—NIV)*

The practice of translating the participle *oi diakonasantes* as the work of a deacon comes from the Episcopal approach to the office of deacon. They follow Catholic tradition which looked upon the *diaconate* as a step in the ranks of the clergy: Men are first ordained deacons and then priests and then bishops. While it is true both from scripture and tradition that some deacons entered the ministry or became elders the Episcopal system can

hardly be justified either from this scripture or the church's experience.

Paul is here discussing the qualifications of a good deacon. Paul's concern is that the church select men who have already proven themselves in fruitful ministry. The apostle hastens to explain that active laymen are acquiring a good standing and great boldness in their faith. Spiritual growth for them is the by-product of dedicated ministry.

Deaconesses

No consideration of this passage would be complete without a careful interpretation of 1 Timothy 3:11:

> *Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.*

The use of *women* rather then *wives* indicates that among those serving in the church's ministry of compassion were women or deaconesses. While the New Testament does not mention an office of deaconess, this verse along with Romans 16:1 and 1 Timothy 5:9-10 indicate that women had a definite ministry in the early church.

Four qualifications are given for those women who serve the church as deaconesses. They are essentially the same qualifications as those required of deacons.

Among the women who ministered were the widows. Paul's instructions to Timothy suggest a category of widows enrolled by the church and supported by the church.

> *Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,*
>
> *having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work. (1 Tim. 5:9-10)*

The regulations called for women sixty years of age or older

with a record of godly deportment. They no doubt were given opportunities of ministry among the saints such as prayer, teaching younger women, and probably as strength permitted ministry to the sick and suffering. References to their work may be found in writings of the Church Fathers.

H. P. Tiddon, Anglican scholar, suggests that women were admitted to the order of widows on the basis of past active service for Christ. Since advanced age prevented the continuation of that same level of active ministry, the widows gave themselves to devotional ministry rather than the practice of philanthropy.[1]

Sixty does not seem to be an advanced age in modern terms, but considering the shorter life expectancy in the first century, a person reaching sixty years of age was considered very elderly. However, at least one ancient source, the Theodosian Code, sets sixty as the age for deaconesses. The council of Chalcedon set forty as the minimum age of a deaconess.[2]

It cannot be established that the church supported widows from the days of the apostles. They were considered deaconesses, but they did constitute a work force of devoted women essential to the church's total ministry. During the post-Apostolic age the order of widows was gradually absorbed by the order of deaconesses.

Kittle's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* suggests that the instruction given the older women in Titus 2:3-5 may provide some insight into the nature of the ministry carried on by widows.[3]

Paul says to Titus:

> *Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,*
>
> *that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,*
>
> *to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored. (Titus 2:3-5)*

These mature, godly women had a responsibility of pastoral care to the young wives of the congregation. The elders and

deacons of the primitive church recognized the role of women in Christian service and provided legitimate outlets of ministry for them.

Phoebe, of Cenchrea, was a business woman who traveled as far as Rome in the course of her activities. In her home church she served as a deaconess and by her faithful ministry won the commendation of the apostle Paul.

The pastoral epistles provide the divine standard for church order. The Holy Spirit gave Paul for the church a basic principal to be followed in selecting leaders and workers. They were all required to be spiritually minded and above reproach in their walk before men.

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[1] H. P. Liddon, *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy*. Klock and Klock: Minneapolis, reprint 1978, p. 56.

[2] Ibid., p. 56.

[3] Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IX, Wm. B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, 1978 edition, pp. 456, 457.

8

The Ministry of the Lay-Elders

The lay-elder is a member of the local church leadership team, working in a Spirit-directed community. The eldership is not a show room for individualism but an opportunity to coordinate with the whole body the Spirit-imparted gift or gifts of ministry. Lay-elders have a large and diversified range of work. A number of leaders with differing gifts can be involved.

The lay eldership is the pastor-elder's strongest support. They are his immediate helpers in the pastoral task of caring for the church. While the work of elders touches all the ministries of the church the focus of the eldership is upon the spiritual ministries. Every church should have a job description which details the functions assigned the lay-elders. The pastor's imput in drafting this document is critical, for he is the supervisor of the elders since their activities relates to his work. The lay-elders, more than any other members in the assembly, assist the pastor or pastors.

Most of the functions of the eldership fall within the circle of pastoral care. The pastor must know that the elders are committed and prepared for the kinds of spiritual duties they are expected to carry out. It is for this reason the scriptural qualifications for lay-elders are as high as those of the pastor-elder.

The best overview of pastoral care found in scripture is Paul's address to the Ephesian elders.

> *Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28)*

The writer to the Hebrews particularizes the pastoral role.

This chapter does not begin to exhaust the possibilities of lay-elder ministry. As churches grow their need for leadership grows. The eldership keeps finding new and creative ways to support leadership of their pastor and to promote the involvement of the laity in the service of Christ.

9

The Ministry of the Deacons

The word *minister* is common to all who serve Christ in His church. It occurs some one hundred times in the New Testament referring both to the service of the clergy and the laity. The apostle Paul spoke of himself as a minister in Colossians 1:23. In Ephesians 4:12 the work of the ministry means the Christian service of every member of the body of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is called a "minister." Against such a broad understanding of ministry it is necessary to place the technical concept of ministry as it relates to deacons and to their female counterparts, the deaconesses.

The same Greek word translated minister is also translated deacon. Deacon is an English transliteration of the Greek word. The deacon is a special kind of minister characterized by compassion and concern for the needs of others. The nature of his office is an index to his work. The first seven deacons were selected at the direction of the apostles to increase the work force of the Jerusalem church. The deacons were to assume leadership in the work for which their gifts fitted them and by so doing would release other brethren whose gifts were prayer and the ministry of the Word.

The modern deacon has just as important a role as did the ancient deacons. With the complexity of society and the sophistication of the church more servants than ever are needed to do the work. Every church needs well-qualified deacons.

The Leadership Role of the Deacon

The office of deacon is a position of leadership. The deacon does not personally perform all the ministries assigned the deacon board. As a leader he recruits and trains helpers so the work force is large enough to carry out its responsibilities. In far too

many churches the deacon does all the work relating to the material aspects of the church. The *diaconate* can enlarge its ministry by involving other lay people in the work. The board of deacons should determine those deacons with the gifts to enlist others and teach them the work. One deacon could be delegated to such a ministry. Other deacons may have gifts of evangelism, or of showing mercy, or of giving. All of these abilities enhance the work of the deacon board.

Each church will want to write its own job description for deacons listing the areas the leadership has agreed should be their function. That guideline should include at least some of the tasks discussed in this chapter. The local church, because of its circumstances, may create other functions for the deacons.

The Distribution of Benevolences

Traditionally, deacons have been assigned to administer the benevolences of the church. Jesus said, "The poor you have always with you." In affluent modern nations there are still the poor. The poor among the saints should be the first concern of the church. The church must think of the poor in the non-Christian community and seek to minister to them. True social concern born of the love of God is the paramount task of the deacon.

Churches located in large metropolitan areas may be surrounded by poverty. The church may be in a changing neighborhood with two or more ethnic communities moving toward control. Because of a poorly conceived deaconship the opportunities to minister in such a community are overlooked. The deacons can build bridges to the community at large. Some congregations have been blessed by establishing "head-start" classes for ethnic children. Family clinics to instruct people in the productive use of their money would be a help. If language is a problem, provide translators and services for people with little or no knowledge of English. Help them find jobs, fill out alien papers and offer classes to teach them English. Practical ministries of this kind in the poor community will open doors for the gospel.

It is not unusual for families within the church to suffer disasters that leave them destitute. The deacons should have at

their disposal money that can be used to relieve the needs of the suffering. Many congregations follow the practice of taking a free-will offering for the deacons' fund at each communion service. Some funds should probably be budgeted for the deacons fund. A loss of job, extended illness, fires, floods, earthquakes and many other conditions come upon both Christian and the non-Christian. The credibility of the church's compassion is established as much by what it does for its own as by what it does for the non-church people.

The Senior Citizen

The twentieth century church has an exciting opportunity of ministry to the elderly. There are more people of retirement age than ever before in our culture. The needs of this group are not always financial. Elderly people need personal attention. Provision should be made for them to participate in group activity. A sizable work force should be assigned to this ministry. Some of the deacons as well as members of the congregation should give this ministry their attention.

Elderly people who are shut-in and unable to attend church should not be left out of the life and activity of the church. Deacons could visit them on a regular basis and teach them the Sunday school lesson. Every church needs a home department for these people in its Sunday school. When the line of communications are kept open these people can make a contribution to the church. Some might be able from their wheel chair or bed to use a telephone. A part of the church's telephone prayer chain could be given them to make contacts when special prayer requests are being circulated. Find something meaningful for them to do. They should be given a church bulletin each week and a set of offering envelopes. In one church pastored by the author two of the biggest contributors to foreign missions were shut-ins past seventy years of age. With a little effort the home department could be ministering to a hundred people. They and their families would know that the church cares.

Ministry to the Sick

The ministry of the deacons to the sick is an ancient tradition.

While the elders are delegated to the ministry of healing, the deacons have the practical care of the sick. How helpful to a family with the mother hospitalized to have the evening meal prepared and brought to the home. What a relief to the husband and father to have a baby sitting service for his pre-school age children while he visits the hospital. What wife would not be comforted by the fact that the deacons cared for the lawn while her husband was hospitalized or perhaps they finished an incompleted paint job. The ministry of compassion to the sick and their families must go beyond a card and some flowers. Changing off nights with a weary spouse at the bedside of a seriously sick husband or wife would help so much to lift their load of care.

Hospitality

The *diaconate* has a ministry of hospitality. The need for entertaining fellow Christians when they traveled was necessary in the ancient church. Public inns and taverns were not available to Christians so the saints opened their homes for this purpose. Modern believers do not have this problem. Motels and hotels are everywhere, with food service and just about any service needed by the traveler. But though the culture has changed, the need for hospitality has not changed. What an exciting ministry a deacon and his family could enjoy by opening their home to overseas missionaries arriving at an airport near their location. Providing overnight lodging, meals, and transportation for the missionary family would be a wonderful expression of the love of Christ in terms of true hospitality.

What about the many new families that visit the church in the course of a month. Each of them could be invited to a home for Sunday dinner. This kind of hospitality would demonstrate the real concern of the church for people and not just statistics.

The deacons might be assigned to oversee the ushers since ushering is a form of hospitality. The initial impression of visitors to the church are often formed by the conduct of the ushers. While the deacons probably cannot assume this task themselves because of their work load, they could be in charge of recruiting, training and overseeing the ushers.

The deacons, deaconesses, and their families are not personally responsible to care for all of the hospitality needs of the church. They should set a good example by their own participation in this ministry, but they must unite all the members in doing the work of entertaining strangers.

The Deacons and the Ordinances

The elders are usually in charge of the spiritual ministries of the church and assist the pastor with the preparation of candidates for baptism and in the distribution of the Lord's Supper. Traditionally the deacons have also related to both of these ordinances. The provision and maintenance of the equipment necessary for baptism is often the work of the deacons. Deaconesses are usually responsible for maintaining and laundering the baptismal robes. The deacons can be enlisted to assist the men at the baptismal service while the deaconesses assist the women. It is helpful to have one of the deacons standing by the baptistry or standing by the pastor in the baptistry to assist him in the event of any difficulty. Good organization and proper planning can make the mechanics of the service something worthy of its high spiritual meaning.

Another humble but beautiful service for deacons and deaconesses is the care of the communion ware. Maintaining a fresh supply of unleavened bread and the grape juice is essential. Washing and storing the communion ware after each service and laundering the linens can be done for the glory of God. A practical system for this responsibility is to assign a deacon and his wife to care for the communion preparation each quarter of the year. One of the deacons should be put in charge of instructing the communion custodians as to their responsibility and the proper procedure. Data should be given them as to the number of portions to prepare. How many reserve portions should there be for unexpected guests or a larger than usual attendance of members. They should also be instructed as to setting the table. The deacon in charge of communion custodians should confer regularly with the pastor as to any necessary change in procedure.

In some churches the elders on a regular basis ask the deacons to assist them in the distribution of the elements at the communion service. It is also helpful for deacons to assist the pastor

and the elders in serving communion to the shut-ins and the sick.

Stewardship

The finances of the local church are a part of the broad concerns of the deacons. The distribution of the benevolences of the church is only the beginning of their concern with finances. The deacon board is the ideal agency of the local church structure to promote stewardship. The average evangelical church fails to train its membership in the Christ-like use of their money. The proper management of money and material resources is a Christian's duty. Stewardship, a necessary discipline for the godly, is a form of service to Christ. Either the believer learns to control his money or his money will control him.

Christians need basic instructions about the stewardship of time, talents, possessions, and money. If every Christian were to obey the Spirit in this regard there would be no financial lack in the ministries of the church. Out of the abundance flows money to finance the overseas outreach and all the supporting institutions at home. The deacons should be knowledgable in what the Bible teaches on this subject, and conducting classes for the membership. They should distribute sound literature on tithing and all forms of giving. A strong *diaconate* might comprise the finance committee for the congregation.

The deacons may discover some of their members are able to give wise counsel regarding the Christian use of money. Families with extremely difficult financial problems could be counseled by understanding members of the deacon board. Such assistance can revolutionize a family. The right use of their money would not only give them the joy of sharing with Christ but it would greatly improve their living conditions.

Ministry to Special Community Needs

The jails, prisons, and other corrective institutions should not be overlooked by the local church in its compassionate outreach to the community. In most communities it is possible for responsible church representatives to minister to the prisons.

Regular services, Bible classes, and literature brings light and blessing within the bleak walls of these institutions. The deacons provide the logical leadership for such a program. Some deacons may have a burden for this work and show evidence that the Holy Spirit has gifted them to reach the hearts of prisoners. From this leadership a team may be selected to cover the penal institutions in the area.

The deacons' ministry goes beyond contact with the prisoners. The families of the prisoners have great needs which are often neglected by both the community and the church. The deacons and the deaconesses will find it most rewarding to minister to prisoners and their families.

The Deacons and Minorities or Ethnics

The influx of new immigrants and refugees plus the black population and aboriginals make the United States and Canada a veritable mosaic of diverse people. The life of the church in today's world is deeply touched by the realities of such pluralism. The rate of neighborhood change is sometimes so rapid as to leave a congregation in ruin and frustration. Some of this could be avoided if the church would keep constant surveilance of its community and react in love to the changes that take place. When new people come into a neighborhood whose language, race, and culture are different from the old residents, some serious effort to build bridges to these new people must come from the church. It should be remembered that the first deacons were appointed in response to tension between two different culture groups, the Hellenistic Jews and the Aramaic-speaking Jews. Modern deacons are called to deal with the same tensions. If the community requires it, some deacons should be assigned to the task of communicating the love of Christ to new neighbors.

In 1970, the Home Missions Board of the Christian Reformed Church called a conference of selected pastors and laymen to discuss the church's mission in today's world. A book containing the papers of that conference was published with the title, *Who in the World?* It speaks in everyday language about the church's ministry to the non-Christian community. It consistently takes the reader back to the New Testament church to

demonstrate the fact that the early church had discovered the forms and methods of effective ministry in the world. The *diaconate* is singled out as an example of a New Testament office that is relevant for now.

> "The *diaconate*, then, is the organizational way of accepting from Jesus His sign of the towel, the symbol of servanthood. But two things have to be remembered here: First, the whole church is a *diaconate*. For practical reasons, some of the servant's task is done by deacons. But Jesus' whole life was spent in service, and this is what He asks of all who follow Him. *Diaconate* spells out the whole character, the full spirit, and the great purpose of the church's mission in the world. The body of Christ is not a loose body of separated functions. The whole body is involved in the service. And the official deacons have the right to tap the talents and resources of every member. For we are all limbs of one body."[1]

Never in the long history of the church has the office of deacon been so necessary. Never has it had such broad opportunities of ministry. The modern deacon is a model of servanthood to the congregation. He is a leader in that he discovers and motivates into action the latent abilities in the congregation. The deacon is the church's best liason to the non-Christian community.

[1] Clifford Christians, Earl Schipper, Wesley Smeder, *Who in the World?*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1972, p. 134.

10

Spiritual Gifts for Elders and Deacons

The New Testament speaks of leaders that are gifted by the Holy Spirit for ministry. The term gift is used to translate the Greek word *charismata*. *Charismata* is related to the Greek word for grace and speaks of divinely imparted ability to minister. Therefore, this kind of leadership is called *charismatic* leadership in theological treatments of the subject. (This term should not be confused with today's popular use of the term charismatic as it refers to the neo-Pentecostal movement.) Some church renewal writers and some church historians have insisted that the church in its purest days, the days of the apostles, knew only a charismatic leadership. The argument continues that office-bearing positions of leadership became prominent as the charismatic leadership phased out. The difficulty with that position is readily seen upon examining the New Testament record. The office-bearing elders and deacons emerged early in the experience of the church and existed along side the charismatic leadership. In fact, spiritual gifts were necessary to the office-bearing leaders so that no noticeable dichotomy existed between office-bearing leaders and charismatic leaders in the first century church. The leadership of the early church was one as should be the leadership of the modern church. Elders and deacons on occasion exercised the gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. Elders functioned in pastoral care roles and as teachers. Phillip, one of the deacons of the Jerusalem church, was greatly used of God as an evangelist and a church planter.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not religious playthings but rich provisions of His grace for the purpose of ministry. Ministry is synonymous with service. The only proper use of gifts is to glorify Jesus Christ by serving Him. That explains Peter's reference to the exercise of gifts as stewardship (1 Pet. 4:10). Be-

DEACON'S QUALIFICATIONS

1. Of honest or good report (reputation).
2. Spiritual character, full of the Holy Spirit.
3. Wise, able to discern right from wrong, true to convictions, without being judgmental.
4. Faith, strong enough to be willing to take risks for God.
5. Grave; possess Christian purpose in your life, have reverence for spiritual matters and whose words reflect that.
6. Not double-tongued; gossipy; relates honestly with all people both publicly and in private.
7. Temperate and not an abuser of chemical substances (alcohol, drugs, etc).
8. Good stewardship; not greedy or grasping, never exploiting others but keeping the material needs and desires in proper perspective.
9. A holder of the Faith; loyal to Christ and the Church.
10. Tested and proved; committed.
11. Blameless.
12. Strong, healthy relationships.
13. Spouse of one mate, honoring the committments you made.
14. Caring for those within the realm of your responsibility, children, spouse, etc.
15. Bold in Faith, not ashamed of Christ or the church so their witness may be effective.

Have a vital union with God; avoid the pitfalls of human traditions and worldliness, lust of the flesh, and doubts caused by other's judgments on you that would enslave you, keep you from being free in Christ; proper spiritual priorities so things, people, etc. don't come between you and the Lord or work as idols; not selfish, covetous, given to anger and wrath, malice or slander or foul talk; truthful without prejudice; compassionate, kind, loving; peace within, thankful and dedicated to God's service in all you do; moderate, tolerant of others when they differ; prayerful with confidence in God; positive thinking rather than always looking for the dark side or the hidden motives of things, expecting the best of others, situations, etc.; above reproach; sensible, dignified, hospitable; teacher; gentle; a peacemaker with proper values regarding money; able to manage their own household well; established in the Faith; a good reputation outside the church; not two-faced; serious and faithful.

[redacted]

CHAPTER 4

Local Church Deacon Training Program

By the Spring (March) of 1979 I came to believe that the office of deacon basically exists to meet the ministry (diakonos) needs of a local church. Therefore, the number of deacons, their precise duties, and maybe even their length of service will differ from place to place, from church to church, from deacon to deacon. In that sense, I am against rigid standardization in the Fellowship, although I am *for* providing sample programs, guidelines and the accrued "collective wisdom" of the Fellowship for churches that are struggling with the diaconate. The diaconate, in its earliest history, I believe, and according to our By-laws, is a *local*, that is, indigenous office.

Based on that belief, and at the encouragement and request of several local church members, I put out a call for those interested in a deacons' training program. There was an excellent response. My sense was, also, that in anticipation of an impending pastoral vacancy (mine) that the church might well have need for several deacons whose primary responsibility would be to enable the church to continue with its ministry during the pastoral vacancy; to provide additional support for the Interim Worship Coordinator (the pulpit committee was his primary support group); to function as a core group of lay ministers within the midst of the church. Secondarily, they would be prepared to function in all aspects of worship (but each to varying degrees based on ability); they would all be expected to nurture the present members of the church during "the transition" (as it came to be known); and finally, they would all choose an area in which they would give their gifts and enhance the diakonos of the church. This final expectation would prove to be the most important, probably.

Their training, as I first conceived it (as I reviewed the survey, and consulted with congregational members, the staff, and other M.C.C. ministers) would include: 1) an intensification of their education concerning *what it means to be a Christian*, including the sources of our faith; 2) what does it mean to be a gay Christian? to be a member of the U.F.M.C.C.?; 3) developing a sensitivity to contemporary theological and social issues that impinge upon us; 4) becoming adequately versed in the rubrics and theology of worship, including the ability to share one's faith, to preach and serve communion; 5) the ability to listen, to counsel, to refer when necessary, and 6) the process of choosing an area of special concern and expertise. I also came to believe that there had to be a screening process involving the pastor, the board, the congregation and the Holy Spirit (hopefully). We would have to look for signs of "collar fever," as it is called, those whose call is not to diakonos, but to serving unhealthy ego needs at the expense of the congregation. I believed that if we were honest, those problems would become apparent, and we would have the courage to face them (I had certainly had to face them before with staff and board members). I believed that we would discover that there is an *economy* in every church: an economy of needs and gifts. If we are obedient, and listen to the Spirit speaking within us, the needs of the church would all be met by the gifts of the members. That's simply my theology of stewardship. There is an economy and a balance. If a church's needs are not met, if it is not doing the ministry it is called to because it doesn't have the resources, then it is because someone is holding out -- is withholding the gifts (charisms) God has given them to give. And that isn't healthy. I came to believe that as our local church was beginning to prepare for a time when there would be great need for healing, for courage, for vision and hope, God was also preparing individuals with the charisms to meet those needs.

I began the deacon training program by sharing some of my beliefs, asking for confirmation, for feedback. I shared with them that I expected there would also be an economy of numbers -- that we would have not too many and not too few deacons; that all areas of ministry in the church would be touched; that there would be a diversity of types of people, women and men, different backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, theologies and politics and personalities. I fully expected to see what Paul speaks of as the "varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit." Amazingly, for the most part, that is what happened.

There were also some very real dilemmas. First of all, the program should have taken six months, and we barely had three months. We really covered six months of material in three months, which was exhausting for all of us. We met for three hours every weeknight, and two days for eight hours each day. That was not enough time for people to absorb everything. We knew that when we started -- but I felt I could not delay my leaving any longer, and I did not want to eliminate anything from the program.

Also, it was a real risk for the church. As it was, I had given my notice eight months before I left (an unusually long time in M.C.C.). We were trying to deal conscientiously with my leaving, and the pastoral transition. I was phasing myself out of counselling, and program involvement as much as possible (which coincided with my need to finish my course work at seminary). It seemed counter to the process to begin a new project of training deacons. Plus, the Interim Worship Coordinator, and not myself, would have to supervise these new deacons and a new pastor would have to inherit them (for

at least a few years). What if the new pastor's ideas and expectations were different? I struggled with whether or not it was my "parting shot," my effort to extend my influence beyond my termination date as pastor. I'm sure my motives were mixed. Leaving that Church was hard. I viewed the training program as my last (and, actually) one of my better gifts to that congregation.

After discussing it with the Board, we decided that it was worth the risk, and I went ahead with the training program. An intensive lay ministry training program (even if it bore no new deacons) could help maintain continuity and energy through the summer and into the fall as the congregation prepared to elect a new pastor. It might also lead the Church in some new directions.

The Training Program I developed was based on the following six principles:

1) HONESTY AND REALITY: It is important to be honest with people about what is and what will be expected of them, from the beginning. I would rather frighten people away than manipulate them into making a decision that they are not fully informed enough to make. I told these candidates about the risks they were taking; that I was not guaranteeing that any of them would be appointed as deacons, even if they passed the program. They were reminded that I would not be around to supervise them once they became deacons. I was honest about the level of competency I expected, and the strenuousness of the program.

2) BEGIN WITH THE BASICS: Deacons training, in my opinion, should begin with the reviewing the sources of our faith and life as Christians: the Bible, Church history, personal experience, knowledge about the world we live in. I believe deacons should be well grounded and encouraged to read and pursue continuing education in all matters pertaining to faith and ministry.

3) TOO MUCH, NOT TOO LITTLE: I think that oversaturation of materials rather than underestimating the candidates abilities is more challenging. If they are presented with more material than they can absorb in a short period of time, they can always go back and review and reread.

4) SUPERVISION: Along with the program, I had individual conferences with the candidates at least twice. The conference involved individual spiritual direction, and counselling, and helping the person search honestly within themselves to find their gifts. We dealt with their fears and hopes about being a deacon.

5) SERVICE AND WHOLENESS: We tried to stress the need to be a whole person, and to deal with others as whole people: not just as minds, or bodies, or categories, but as whole persons. We spent time talking about our prayer lives, our own journeys of faith, our own struggles with being a Christian in a world that seeks to pervert that reality. We dealt with group problems, conflicts and issues of trust and caring. We faced the fact that we didn't all initially like or trust each other. Nor did we automatically believe in the validity of one another's callings. We had to be honest with each other, and strive for wholeness in our relationships.

6) GIFTS ARE FOR GIVING: Above and beyond the minimal expectations of a deacon (in service and worship assistance) what myself and the Board and the congregation were concerned about was *their own sense of how their gifts (charisms) would be channelled to enable the diakonos ministry of liberation of the local church.* This means encouraging initiative, creativity, adaptability and sacrifice.

I taught most of the training program myself, but brought in other people as well. I asked the one previously appointed deacon to share with us frequently; I asked several lay people in the congregation to teach areas such as counselling, prison ministry, areas of ministry to those with substance abuse problems, racism and sexism, and administration as ministry. Reverend Troy Perry visited us during this time, and I required them to sit in on his workshop of "Homosexuality and the Bible" and "The U.F.M.C.C. Today" (which included the history of M.C.C. as well). As for my part of the training program, please refer to Attachment 4. I felt it was very important that in addition to a passing acquaintance with the content of the Bible, that they have some idea of the various approaches to Scripture. I chose Bernard Anderson's book, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible,* and several articles (see Attachment 4), for that purpose. I found that the only person in the group who was not Biblically illiterate was someone from a fundamentalist background, who had to go through a re-learning process. Also, as a member of M.C.C., and potential deacons, I knew they had to be prepared (actually, drilled) to be able to answer the question, "But doesn't the Bible condemn homosexuality?" I required that, in this case, they be able to name all six scripture passages which are purported to speak about homosexuality, and that they be able to specifically refute the claims that the Bible condemns homosexuality; and that they be able

to point to Scriptures that support the truth that God loves all people, and shows no partiality. As deacons, they will be looked upon as representatives of M.C.C., and will be asked by both struggling gay Christians and fundamentalists alike to give an account of themselves and M.C.C.'s stand. They must be able to tie together their knowledge of scripture and their own personal testimony of God's love for them. No one could be appointed a deacon who could not pass both a written and oral exam in this area. (See Attachments 5 & 6).

I had a lot of fun teaching the section on "Vocabularies of Faith." This is an original concept of mine that I developed especially for this program. (See lecture notes in Attachment 4). One of our biggest problems and opportunities in M.C.C. is the tremendous divergence in our religious and denominational backgrounds. Because of that, we often do not learn that there are many Christian vocabularies (or idioms). Some people use one vocabulary exclusively, others combine them.

My premise is that people in M.C.C. need to develop ecumenical Christian vocabularies, and thus become theologically "multilingual." We need to be able to hear and speak about our faith in many vocabularies. We need to dare to invent new vocabularies of our own. I identified for the deacon candidates at least 15 Christian vocabularies and the most familiar words/concepts in each idiom. We then attempted to contrast and compare the vocabularies. I asked the deacon candidates to identify their own vocabulary, and then to attempt to learn to speak in another (and hopefully very unfamiliar) vocabulary. We began to find out that sometimes people used the *same* words to mean different things; sometimes they used different words to say the same things; sometimes they used different words and mean different things. Some of the vocabularies seemed to have natural affinities; others seemed almost to be mutually exclusive and opposing.

That whole concept of "vocabularies of faith" really seemed to excite the candidates. They began to understand the genesis of some of their communication problems with each other. They began to loosen up, and to discover new ways of communicating their own faith. And they began to be able to "hear past" words and phrases that had previously been a communication barrier.

We discovered that faith-sharing is a real ministry all its own. In order to do that, we need to become not only good listeners, but theologically multi-lingual. We even discovered that there is an M.C.C. vocabulary.

It was because of this "vocabulary of faith" idea that church history, and even Biblical language came alive for some of the candidates for the first time. Suddenly, they got in touch with why some words turned them off and others opened them up.

The two all-day sessions were also quite rewarding. The first one we spent talking about Christian discipleship, and the meaning of "diakonos" and the diaconate. Several people shared new ideas about it. We discussed the gifts of the Spirit, and everyday gifts. I began to challenge them to look into themselves. What gifts did they have? Compare your perceptions of yourself and your gifts to the economy of our Church – what does our Church need? We did role-playing and serious faith-sharing. We used some of the questions from "The Deacon's Guide to Worship" (Attachment 7) as a beginning point. There were moments of self-discovery. We spent the day at someone's home to experience a non-academic setting, in a living room atmosphere. We shared about what it really means to follow Jesus. I asked them to use that day as a model of a spiritual support group, which I hoped they could become for each other.

The other all-day experience revolved around worship. I prepared (with the help from three exhorters) a "Deacon's Guide to Worship," which gave samples of order of worship for the rites and sacraments.

We went over what worship is, the liturgical year, and I had them practice doing all of the rites and sacraments (we had to extend this class, as I remember). Also, they each had to prepare a five-minute homily which they gave to the rest of us outdoors, in the park across from the Church office (for some of them, it was really their first public speaking experience – and it was very public). We critiqued all the homilies and talked about the deacon's role in worship. All came to understand that they had to have the minimum competency to perform the rites and sacraments and to give a homily if called upon (all at the discretion of the Worship Coordinator or Pastor). In M.C.C., because many of our small groups are without pastors, deacons are asked by the District to occasionally travel to other church groups to lead worship, preach and consecrate Communion. Much like the early Church, they have functioned as missionaries (in fact, one of our Districts actually has named some "missionary deacons.").

The candidates came to accept that some of us were more dynamic speakers than others; some of us had worship charisms and others did not. That would probably determine which of them would be called upon in that capacity, and how frequently.

In helping them learn to do the rites and sacraments, I had to both help them de-mystify them, and yet learn to value and hold them even more sacred. That is true freedom in worship. Worship is not meant to be "funny people in funny costumes" who have magic fingers and special privileges that common ordinary lay folk do not have. Leading worship is enabling the community to joyfully worship the One God, and experience in that worship an empowerment for service on behalf of the One God.

to point to [illegible] that support for work this time [illegible] of people, and always on parallels. As [illegible], they will be looked upon [illegible] of M.C.C., [illegible] to work for both [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] in greater [illegible] of M.C.C.'s [illegible]. They would be able to [illegible] together their knowledge of [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] of God's [illegible]. [illegible] and [illegible] in the [illegible].

I [illegible] of the [illegible] "[illegible] of Faith." [illegible] a [illegible] concept of [illegible] for the program, [illegible]. [illegible] of [illegible] in M.C.C. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

My [illegible] is that [illegible] in M.C.C. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], and [illegible] [illegible]. We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

The [illegible] "[illegible] of faith" [illegible]. They began to understand [illegible] of [illegible] each other. They began to [illegible] new ways of understanding [illegible] faith. And they began to [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible].

We discovered that [illegible] in order to do that, we need to become [illegible], [illegible]. [illegible] that [illegible] M.C.C. [illegible].

[illegible] "[illegible] of faith" [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] we [illegible] talking about [illegible] [illegible] "[illegible]" and [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the Church [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

We [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] M.C.C. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Church [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] worship [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] One God.

At the beginning of the training sessions, I had presented seven people to the Board as deacon candidates. After the training session was completed, tests passed, each deacon candidate, in consultation with me, chose an area of special service. Then I presented each of them to the Board, with the understanding that they were accountable to the pastor and Board, and through them to the congregation, to enable the ministry of this local M.C.C. The Board voted on each person and approved my seven appointments.

On my last Sunday as pastor, I installed seven deacons, whose special areas of diakonos were: Christian Education development, Evangelism, Communications, Social Action, Prison Ministry, Drama and Innovative Worship, and Visitation Program development. They were all robed, and were given stoles with symbols of their choice (representing their service area). They all participated in the worship service that evening.

CHAPTER 5

Evaluations, Recommendations and Conclusions about the Diaconate in U.F.M.C.C.

EVALUATION:

Most of the evaluation was in the form of feedback from the deacon candidates themselves. They felt the training program tried to cover too much too fast. They also felt that in the urgency to cover much material, discussion time was too limited.

Some deacons said they did not feel they had enough practice in relationship to worship: they still felt uncomfortable in leading. Others felt that we should have spent more time (with supervision) in areas of counselling. I recommended that each of them take one of the many weekend seminars given around the city in Crisis Counselling/Suicide Prevention.

My evaluation process was really limited by my leaving the city -- I had no real opportunity to evaluate their performance in the role of deacon. In general, however, the six months of transition after my leaving was a relatively energetic, positive time for the church, with much cooperation and determination to keep growing and ministering. *Some* of this I would like to attribute to the training of those seven persons and the active role they all played in the transition.

Reverend Jay Deacon, Editor of *The Gay Christian*, (in conversations with me) also challenged me in two areas: he thinks we need to develop stronger contracting and accountability. It may take longer than three months for a person to determine their real gifts and aptitudes. Should there be a *written* agreement between the deacon and the Church, outlining their areas of service? He also questions the whole "installation process." Do robes and stoles reinforce the "ceremonial" rather than the service role of deacons? Also, how is the congregation involved? In some M.C.C.'s after the Board approves them, they must be approved by a congregational vote. Is this wise? Is it necessary?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following are my personal recommendations to the U.F.M.C.C. regarding the diaconate:

1) *Development of Theology of Ministry*: I would recommend that the Commission on Faith, Fellowship and Order consider among its priorities the exploration of a theology of ministry, including the priesthood of all believers, and the rationale for lay and professional ministry. Included in this exploration should be some thinking through of the meaning and theology of ordination in the U.F.M.C.C. I would also recommend that the theological language that results be used to *improve* and update (make contemporary) the language about deacons in Article IV of the U.F.M.C.C. By-laws.

2) *Development of a U.F.M.C.C. ecclesiology:* This is essentially the work of the Commission on Government, Structures and Systems. I support the viewpoint that the Commission was not called into being to put band aids on our structure, but to critique it totally, and to help us intentionally shape the future life and ministry and polity of the U.F.M.C.C. I support their interim proposed revision of Article IV, which re-emphasized the diaconate as a lay office. Further, at this point I do not support the ordination of deacons, at least not until we understand the meaning of ordination. Since so few people have survived three years in the diaconate, I think it would be a mistake to, at this point, ordain them (that assumes a lifetime committment). The three year appointment assures accountability, it provides a relatively easy way for someone to take time off from this service, and it does not confuse the layperson/clergy issue. It also does not play into the "diaconate as a stepping stone to the professional ministry" idea, which the U.F.M.C.C. By-laws reject.

At the same time, I would like our Government, Structures and Systems Commission to look at the newly revised Roman Catholic permanent diaconate. Over the next ten years, I would like M.C.C. to consider that as a *future* possibility, once we have had more experience. At this point, a person may still be a deacon continually if they are reappointed (and if they do not change Churches frequently).

Also, in the matter of deacons wearing collars, it is simply *not* true that one needs a collar to get into a hospital or prison to visit. Many Baptist and Pentecostal ministers and deacons have done that for *years* without ever wearing a collar. In this vein, I also recommend to the U.F.M.C.C. that we abolish the wearing of collars by deacons. The only ones who will miss them too much, in my opinion, will be those who like them for the wrong reasons.

I also really am opposed to *too* much standardization of structure at this point (or perhaps ever). I envision M.C.C. continuing to have an indigenous diaconate, tailored to meet the ministry needs of the local Church. This seems to be both highly contemporary and Biblical. I hope that we never structure

it so that it fails to be a local office. In that context, my understanding is that it is the Church that puts forth the call for deacons and then persons respond to the call. It should not be, in my opinion, that an individual wants to be a deacon and the Church accomodates *their* need. In this sense it is different from those who feel an individual call to the professional ministry. This understanding may help weed out those who *really* feel called to the professional ministry, but who want to take a short cut to that through the diaconate.

3) *Deacon Training*: I recommend that the Fellowship provide a *Resource Packet for the Diaconate* that will include:

1. Overview of the history and tradition of the diaconate.
2. U.F.M.C.C. materials on the diaconate, Theology of Ministry.
3. Several models of the diaconate, statements by active, experienced deacons.
4. Several sample training programs; sample reporting forms, contracts, etc.
5. Suggestions for installation, appropriate vestments when desired.

I would hope that this paper might become a basis for such a packet. Also, Samaritan Theological Institute has several excellent correspondence courses to supplement a good diaconate program, particularly "Introduction to the Bible," and "Homosexuality and the Bible." Samaritan Theological Institute also provides many excellent seminars (particularly on "worship" and "Inclusive Language") and an extension program that you may request be offered in your District or at your local Church.

I do not think that deacons can be fully and adequately trained in less than six months. I also think that a continuing education program for deacons is essential.

One-to-one supervision is the only way I know of to really screen individuals applying for the diaconate, and also to help with remedial needs, or to help an individual really and honestly explore their ministry in the Church. It may seem time consuming, but I found it to be well worth the time spent. An excellent tool for one-to-one supervision is the "Case Study Method," offered by James Glasse in *Putting It Together In The Parish*.[1] I have used this method with deacons and exhorters. Use as *many* resources as are available to you, in the Fellowship and in the community: do not cheat your future deacons out of an opportunity to grow and learn.

Involve former or presently serving deacons to share with the candidates. Involve the Board of Directors in the training process if possible, as they will be asked to approve the pastor's appointments.

CONCLUSIONS:

Perhaps no other ecclesiastical office, or church position has been surrounded by so much confusion. On the other hand, I firmly believe that the diaconate provides some of our *best* opportunities for innovation, experimentation and really questioning and reflecting about the nature of the Church and its ministry. We are *free*, in our Fellowship, to explore the meaning of diakonos, in all its fullness. There are incredible opportunities all around us for service, for enabling liberation.

I have found myself getting impatient in the past over deacons I appointed who wanted to be led around by the nose, who had to be told what to do. I've also seen deacons frustrated by pastors who think the only role of a deacon is to read the Gospel and polish the candleabra. We are free! Free to serve, to give, to risk, to be a sign of liberation among a people who have internalized oppression. A deacon in M.C.C. should be a real, down-to-earth living reminder of that freedom.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1:

1 McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, New York, 1965, p. 182
2 Hardy, "Deacons in History and Practice," from Nolan, *The Deaconate Now*, Washington, D.C., 1968, p. 15
3 Echlin, *The Deacon in the Church*, Alba House, 1971, p. 4
4 Echlin, p. 4
5 Boer, *A Short History of the Early Church*, Grand Rapids, 1976, p. 30
6 Schweizer, *Church Order in the New Testament*, London, 1861, p. 100
7 Echlin, p. 30
8 Deacon, F. Jay, "Understanding and Misunderstanding the Church," from "The Gay Christian," August, 1976, p. 2
9 Boer sees this passage as the story of the origins of the elders or presbyters, from *A Short History of the Early Church*, p. 23
10 Deacon, p. 5; Echlin, p. 30
11 Deacon, p. 5
12 Boer, p. 29
13 Echlin, p. 19
14 Deacon, p. 4
15 Echlin, p. 48
16 Hardy, p. 17
17 Echlin, p. 19
18 Echlin, p. 76
19 Echlin, p. 16
20 Echlin, p. 66
21 Echlin, p. 35
22 Kung, *The Church*, Garden City, NY, 1976, p. 518
23 Echlin, p. 76
24 Kung, p. 527
25 Echlin, p. 23
26 Echlin, p. 38
27 Boer, p. 23
28 Echlin, p. 25
29 Echlin, p. 23
30 Echlin, p. 91
31 Paul, Robert, "The Deacon in Protestantism," from Nolan, *The Deaconate Now*, 1968, pp. 41-43
32 Thompson, *Through the Ages*, John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1965, p. 338
33 Taken from the "Recommended Guidelines for the Office of Deacon in Churches Belonging to the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ," 1969. (Not copyrighted - my copy courtesy of Rev. Jeffrey Pulling.)

CHAPTER 2:

1 Perry, *The Lord is My Shepherd and Knows I'm Gay*, Nash Publishing Co., Los Angeles, 1972, entire book
2 See "In Unity," February 1978, pp. 19-20: "Women Make History in Houston, Texas,"; April 1978, p. 20 "What is Sexism,"; June/July 1978, p. 19, "Sexism: One More View"; August/September 1978, p. 22, "ERA Supporters March in D.C.: But Where Was MCC?"; February/March 1979: p. 10: "Is the Church Sexist? Is the Pope Catholic?"; and also see "The Gay Christian," notably Ziegler, Karen, "Creation Myths: Bridge to Human Wholeness," April/May 1979, pp. 19-26. See also, *Feminist Views of Christianity*, compiled by Jennie Bull, Mother Eagle Press, Northeast District of the UFMCC, c/o MCC, Washington, D.C., 1977.
3 Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, "Women in the New Testament," p. 12, from *Scripture and the Church*, edited by Robert Heyer, NY 1976.
4 Fiorenza, whole article
5 (See footnote 2 above)
6 McCoy, Renee, "Third World Conference, A Personal Viewpoint," "In Unity" December 1979/January 1980, pp. 4-5

7 Neal, Maria Augusta, *A socio-Theology of Letting Go*, New York, 1977, whole book
8 Daly, Mary, *Beyond God the Father*, Boston, 1973: and Deacon, whole article

CHAPTER 3:

1 UFMCC By-laws, pp. 7 and 8
2 However, in the Early days of MCC, before there were By-laws, some deacons were ordained in local churches
3 Commission on Faith Fellowship and Order Report (FFO Report), 1979, (Attachment No. 2), p. 1
4 FFO Report, 1976, p. 1
5 FFO Report, 1976, p. 5
6 FFO Report, 1976, p. 6
7 Dulles, Avery, *Models of the Church*, Garden City, NY 1978, pp. 95-108
8 Dulles, pp. 67-79
9 Using Rollo May's definition of the "diamonic" found in *Love and Will*, NY, 1969, pp. 122-172, especially: "the diamonic is any natural function which has the power to take over the whole person. Sex and eros, anger and rage and the *craving for power* are examples . . . The diamonic becomes evil when it usurps the total self without regard to the integration of that self, or to the unique forms and desires of others and their need for integration (p. 123). I believe this definition applies not only to individuals, but to groups and organizations, such as churches.
10 The UFMCC has three "levels" of local congregations: a "Study Group," ten or more persons who want to begin the process of forming an MCC church with no voting privileges; a "Mission," twenty-five or more people who can support a pastor at least part time, and who are beginning to reach out into the wider community, in ministry, with voting privileges at conferences; and a "Chartered Church," thirty-five or more people, who can support a pastor and a full program of church life, who have full voting privileges, and are fully self-governing (not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Home Missions).
11 UFMCC By-laws, p.
12 This concept was, in fact, proposed in "The Lenten Living Room Series," authored by Rev. Jim Glyer, Universal Fellowship Press, LA.

CHAPTER 5:

1 Glasse, James, *Putting It Together in the Parish*, pp. 103-106

FROM:
Rosten, Leo: Religions of America (A Look Magazine series), Simon and Schuster, N.Y. 1955.

While this book is out of date and does not begin to cover the Black churches, and the Pentecostal groups, it is an excellent source for descriptions of the more traditional groups in America. One can extrapolate from it much information about newer groups as well, if one uses the family chart at the back of the selection, since the beliefs rarely change within families of religious groups over time.

One thing needs to be stated, however, and that is that in the ensuing 35 years, the liberals have gotten more liberal, and the conservatives have become more conservatives, so that the polarization between these groups has hardened into a doctrinal warfare. Yet, as my other paper suggests, liturgically many groups have gotten closer.

M. Ragona

Doctrines and Beliefs

1. What Catholics, Jews, and Protestants Believe: A Comparison Chart *

By Stanley I. Stuber

Reprinted by permission from the February, 1954, issue of the *International Journal of Religious Education.* Reprints of this chart are available from the National Council of Churches, 79 E. Adams Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

GOD

Protestants

God is one; manifested as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Protestants believe in a much more individual and direct approach to God than do Roman Catholics. More stress is placed on the love of God, as revealed in Christ, than in a God of law and justice.

Roman Catholics

Supreme Being, infinitely perfect, who made all things and keeps them in existence. God is the only one God, but has three divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Revealed through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who teaches through the Catholic Church.

Jews

One God, personal and universal, whose ways are beyond understanding, yet whose reality gives purpose to man and to the world. No one can serve as an intermediary between God and man.

CHRIST

Protestants

Accept Christ as divine Son of God. Believe in direct, personal relationship, rather than through Church institutionalism, including Virgin Mary. He is elder brother, moral leader, as well as Messiah and Savior.

Roman Catholics

Christ is God made man. Born of the Virgin Mary, incarnation of God, atonement for sin, bodily resurrection. Second Person of Trinity. Both man and God. Salvation through his sacrifice on the Cross, manifested in the Mass.

Jews

Many accept Jesus as a child of God, as a Jew, and as a prophet or inspired teacher, with no supernatural powers. They do not accept the Divinity and Atonement of Christ.

ONE TRUE RELIGION

Protestants

Protestantism has never claimed to be the one and only true religion; but that Christ is the only true way to salvation—not the Church. Recognize Roman Catholics and members of the Eastern Orthodox churches as Christians. Desire the same recognition from others.

Roman Catholics

"We know that the Catholic Church is the one true Church established by Christ because it alone has the marks of the true Church." (One, holy, universal, apostolic.) "We know that no other church but the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ because no other church has these four marks." (*Catechism of Christian Doctrine*)

* The statements listed here are drawn by the author from authentic sources within the faiths concerned, and represent the analysis of each faith by authorities within that faith, not the opinion of one about the others.

Jews

Jews do not claim that their religion alone is the true one. They are content that others have their own faith, as long as it has elements of decency, kindliness, justice, and integrity. However, Jews regard *Judaism* as the only religion for Jews.

CHURCH

Protestants

Protestants believe that the Church belongs to all true Christians, and is a community of forgiven sinners. Christ the only head. Voluntary attendance and financial support. Make a difference between Kingdom of God and the Church as an institution.

Roman Catholics

Christ founded the Roman Catholic Church. It is the Body of Christ. The congregation of all baptized persons united in the same faith, sacrifice, sacraments, pope and bishops. Peter the first pope. Chief attributes of the Church: authority, infallibility, indefectibility. Saving institution represented in papacy and priesthood.

Jews

Jews are permitted to attend Christian churches as visitors, not as worshipers. They have their own synagogues and temples. These are self-governing. Most Jews will join interfaith services when Bible readings, prayers, hymns are acceptable to all concerned.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Protestants

No one is automatically born into the Protestant faith. Baptism the usual way to membership. Both infant and adult baptism practiced. Infant baptism followed by confirmation. Stress is placed upon active, not formal, membership.

Roman Catholics

Baptism is the gateway to the Church. Each remains a member (from infancy) so long as he professes the "one true faith"; does not withdraw through schism or heresy, or is not excommunicated.

Jews

Jews are born into Judaism. Converts accepted upon commitment to faith. (Circumcision the outward sign for males.) Confirmation personal recognition of membership.

BIBLE

Protestants

Accept Old and New Testaments as inspired, but not *Aprocrypha*. Individual right of interpretation. Final authority for faith and life.

Roman Catholics

Inspired Word of God. Interpreted by the Church, which preceded it. 72 books, including *Apocrypha*. Not sufficient guide; tradition of Church added.

Jews

Accept the Old Testament, but not the *Apocrypha* or New Testament. First five books of Moses, called *Torah*, are considered basic to the faith. Wide range of interpretation.

SACRAMENTS

Protestants

Two: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Wide variation of meaning, from a saving sacrament to mere symbol. Protestants are not "sacramentalists."

Roman Catholics

Seven: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony. All instituted by Christ and all give grace.

Jews

No sacraments, but many rites and ceremonies such as circumcision, Bar Mitzvah, confirmation. Reject all imagery.

PRAYER

Protestants

Honor is paid to saints, but prayers never directed to them. Emphasis placed upon direct approach to God through prayer. No beads or rosary used. Informal, individual prayers encouraged. Worship must be in spirit and in truth.

Roman Catholics

Largely formal prayers not only for themselves personally, but for others (such as those in purgatory). Prayers through Virgin Mary and saints. Use of the rosary as aid to prayer. Not all prayers answered.

Jews

Great stress placed upon prayer: petitions, adoration, confession of sin, expression of joyful fellowship, thanksgiving. Found both in daily personal devotions and in public worship.

SIN

Protestants

Original sin through Adam usually accepted, and plan of salvation through Christ's death on the Cross. All in need of redemption. But salvation comes through Christ and not Church; forgiveness comes from Christ and not through priest.

Roman Catholics

Original sin due to Adam's "fall." Baptism removes this, but sins after baptism must be removed through penance and absolution of the priest. Sins are carefully catalogued, along with penalties.

Jews

Recognize two kinds of sin: against man; against God. Must seek forgiveness of the first from those sinned against. Sin against God expiated by "a return to God."

HEAVEN and HELL

Protestants

Believe in both heaven and hell, but not purgatory. Wide differences in interpretation. General belief in some form of punishment for sin, and eternal reward for righteousness.

Roman Catholics

Accept literal heaven and hell, plus temporal place of punishment known as purgatory.

Jews

Most Jews no longer accept any literal conception of heaven and hell. More concerned with leading a good life in this world, rather than reward or punishment in the next (which they do not reject).

EVANGELISM

Protestants

A basic principle and practice with Protestants, linked closely to church extension, world missions, and salvation.

Roman Catholics

Mostly conducted by the priesthood, although laity now being encouraged to be evangelists and win converts.

Jews

Not a proselytizing religion, although sincere converts are welcomed.

CONFESSION

Protestants

Confession of sins directed to Christ. He alone has power of forgiveness (along with God). Counseling services of pastors now encouraged, but no absolution.

Roman Catholics

All must go to confession. Confession tied directly to penance and power of priest to forgive sins.

Jews

Confess sins directly to God. Have no intermediary. Day of Atonement on collective as well as individual basis. Personal confession also before marriage and just prior to death.

MARRIAGE

Protestants

While secular (civil) marriage contract is recognized, the sacredness of the marriage bond is stressed. Love basis of marriage. Beautiful ceremony either at home or church the usual practice.

Roman Catholics

A sacrament binding a baptized man and a baptized woman for life. Parties actually perform ceremony, conferring on each other the sacrament.

Jews

Marriage much more than a personal matter; part of entire Jewish community. Usually elaborate marriage rites and symbols.

DIVORCE

Protestants

Divorce is allowed under certain conditions such as adultery and wilful desertion, but is held as a last resort. Will remarry the innocent party.

Roman Catholics

Not allowed. Separation permitted. An-

nulment, when there has been "no true marriage," is sometimes granted.

Jews

Divorce is permitted when living together is intolerable. Emphasis on reconciliation and better understanding.

BIRTH CONTROL

Protestants

Not thought of as a sin. Permitted when not abused. May be employed for health purposes.

Roman Catholics

Not permitted under any circumstances by any artificial means, and birth prevention is considered a grave sin.

Jews

Permitted and even advocated when it is for the welfare of all concerned.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Protestants

Individual supreme; salvation a very personal matter. Priesthood of all believers stressed. Nothing can be substituted for personal responsibility.

Roman Catholics

Roman Catholicism stresses individual responsibility for sin and salvation, but power is placed in Church and priesthood—not in the individual.

Jews

All Jews completely free as individuals. Rabbis have no authority over individuals. No religious hierarchy.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Protestants

While salvation is thought of as an individual affair, Protestants have always applied their faith in good works to all areas of life. Have responsibility to community. Along with missions goes the desire to build as much of the Kingdom of God into the world as possible.

Roman Catholics

Parents responsible for well-being of children. Taught to love country and obey all laws. Charity basic principle. Social teaching of Pope Leo XIII now championed by Church.

Jews

Have a marked sense of community relationships and service. Charity basic tenet. Inspired by Old Testament prophets. Human rights, freedom, and equality paramount in Jewish practice.

2. Comparison of Religious Beliefs: 15 American Denominations

Prepared by ROBINETTE NIXON and BARBARA J. KAPLAN

This summary-comparison of religious beliefs (of the fifteen denominations whose creeds have been presented in the main body of this book) is designed solely as a cross-reference aid.

The material which follows is not to be construed as representing official doctrine—except where the articles in *Look* Magazine, from which these extracts are taken, were themselves approved by a denomination. Nor does this summary attempt to include the variations in creed and practice of groups within any individual denomination.

The material has been arranged by points of creed or practice: under each point, the position of the religious groups is listed in alphabetical order.

THE BIBLE

Baptists. All Baptists believe in the inspiration of the Bible, but only the extreme fundamentalists accept it literally or regard it as infallible in every detail. All Baptists accept the Bible as infallible in religious teachings and as a trustworthy record of the progressive revelation of God, climaxed by the supreme revelation of Himself in Jesus

Christ. No official dogma prescribes how an individual Baptist shall interpret the Bible.

Catholics. The Church is the divinely appointed custodian of the Bible and has the final word on what is meant in any specific passage. The Church guards orthodoxy (including interpretation of the Scriptures) and passes down essential Christian tradition from one generation to another.

Christian Scientists. Each person, of any religion, can find what is satisfying to him as the spiritual meaning in the Bible. But Christian Scientists feel that Mary Baker Eddy's book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures,* offers the complete spiritual meaning of the Bible.

Congregationalists. The Bible reveals God in a way which will never be superseded. Christ shows that God is love; all subsequent knowledge, imparted to men by God through the Scriptures, merely elaborates this fundamental truth. Congregationalists apply methods of science to Bible study; thus, they feel they know what God is saying in the Bible better than their fathers who lived in a pre-scientific age.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples share the common Protestant belief that the Bible (except for the Apocryphal Books) is the inspired Word of God, written at different times under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Many Disciples accept the New Testament as a third and purely Christian dispensation, following the Old Testament which represents two dispensations.

Fundamentalist Disciples accept the Authorized Version of the Bible as the final and infallible word of God. The liberals believe newer translations and studies of inspired scholars have thrown new light on many passages of the Scriptures.

Episcopalians. The Holy Scriptures are the great source and testing ground of Christian doctrine. But the Episcopal Church does not hold to the literal inerrancy of Scripture. The Bible is considered sacred for its general inspiration, as the record of God's revelation.

Jehovah's Witnesses. The Bible is followed all the way, not half the way. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures are considered entirely consistent and practical for our day.

Jews. Orthodox Jews accept the Bible as the revealed Will of God. Reform Jews accept as binding only the moral laws of the Bible. Conservative Jews follow the pattern of traditional Judaism but regard it as an evolving, ever-growing religion.

Lutherans. God's Word is recorded in the Bible, but the Word itself is a living, active thing through which the Holy Spirit stirs us to growth in understanding and obedience to God's will.

Methodists. Methodists look upon the Bible as a library of inspired books containing the progressive revelation of God. They believe in the "open Bible" and encourage the individual to read it for himself, leaving him free to make his own interpretation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"Mormons." The Bible is basic to "Mormon" belief. The King James version is used officially and is believed "to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly." (8th Article of Faith.) The Book of Mormon is a complementary work accepted by "Mormons" as scripture.

Presbyterians. Presbyterians believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and "the only infallible rule of faith and practice," and that they are the source of those truths by which men live. They believe that God spoke through men whose minds and hearts He had touched. They therefore emphasize inspired men, not inspired words.

Quakers. Friends have always believed that the Truth is found in the Bible. rather than holding that what has been written is true *because* it is in the Bible.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible literally and believe that the authors were inspired by God. There have been many translations but the original intent of the authors has come down unimpaired through the centuries, the original message is clearly discernible, and "the word of the Lord endureth forever." The record of creation in the first chapter of Genesis is considered not fable but literal fact.

Unitarians. The doctrine of "revelation," of the absolute and indisputable authority of the Bible, is alien to Unitarian faith and teaching. Unitarians hold the Bible very dear, but they reserve the prerogative of critical appreciation.

CREED

Baptists. There is no single, official creed. The nearest statement is the so-called "Grand Rapids Affirmation," adopted by the American Baptist Convention on May 23, 1946. It resolves that faith be reaffirmed in the New Testament as a divinely inspired record and therefore an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. It also calls all its churches to the common task of sharing the whole Gospel with the whole world.

Catholics. The chief articles of faith are summed up in the creeds. There are four great creeds: The Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian, and that of Pius IV. Equally essential to Catholic belief are the doctrines and dogmas proclaimed infallibly true by the teaching authority of the Church—e.g., the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, her assumption into heaven after death, the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, and so forth.

Christian Scientists. Christian Scientists have no formal creed. They have six brief religious tenets to which all members of the Church of Christ, Scientist, subscribe. (These are found in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures,* by Mary Baker Eddy.)

Congregationalists. Each particular congregation is accustomed to write its own creed. A few churches use the Apostles' Creed.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples of Christ have no creed but Christ and no doctrines save those which are found in the New Testament or are reasonably to be inferred therefrom.

Episcopalians. Basic Episcopalian beliefs are affirmed in the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed.

Jehovah's Witnesses. The Witnesses have no creed. They follow the Bible completely.

Jews. There is no formal creed. However, the *Talmud* speaks of three central principles in life: Torah—or learning; service of God; and the performance of good deeds, or charity. This represents the core of Judaism.

Lutherans. Lutheran teachings are based on the common Christian faith described in the New Testament and first summarized in the Apostles' Creed.

Methodists. Methodists are not required to sign any formal creed. Those joining the church are asked to affirm allegiance to Christ and the New Testament faith.

"Mormons." Basic Latter-day Saint beliefs are to be found in the "Mormon" Articles of Faith.

Presbyterians. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the creed of English-speaking Presbyterians. Most adherents accept also the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds.

Quakers. There is no written or formal creed. Serving as a substitute are the "Queries," a set of questions designed to encourage the faithfulness of the members in their religious life.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists do not make use of a formal creed. They hold certain fundamental beliefs based, they claim, upon the Bible.

Unitarians. Unitarians have no formal creed. Individualistic, they prefer to let every Unitarian speak for himself about his faith.

BAPTISM

Baptists. Baptism is by immersion. It is limited to adults and to such children as have reached an age when they can understand the meaning of the ceremony. Baptists look upon immersion as realistic symbolism, through which the life of sin is buried and the new life of faith emerges.

Catholics. Baptism restores supernatural life. Without that life, man does not have the capacity to enjoy heaven. Adults may gain the life of grace by an act of perfect contrition or pure love of God ("baptism of desire"). Infants are incapable of such an act of the will; unbaptized babies cannot go to heaven but in their state of limbo do not suffer in any way.

Christian Scientists. Baptism means purification from all material sense and is not practiced in the material form.

Congregationalists. Baptism is the rite by which the Church takes a child or an adult to itself. The mode is usually "sprinkling," though other forms may be used if desired.

Disciples of Christ. Baptism is by immersion as an act of obedience and surrender, a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Only those who are adult enough to know what they are doing when they stand up to confess Christ are baptized.

Episcopalians. All who are baptized (whether by Episcopalian or other baptism, provided it is with water and in the name of the Holy Trinity) are members of the Church of Christ. Even those who are not actually baptized, but by intention would be baptized if they were able, are believed to be "saved."

Jehovah's Witnesses. Baptism is complete submersion. It is not for infants but for persons of responsible age who have the ability to learn.

Jews. In traditional Judaism, baptism is required only for those converted from another faith.

Lutherans. In baptism a person is born into the Kingdom of God and becomes an heir of salvation.

Methodists. Baptism is usually by sprinkling. It is a sign not only of profession but also of regeneration, or a new birth. The church assumes responsibility for her baptized children and awaits the time when they will be mature enough to appreciate and assume for themselves the vows made at baptism.

"Mormons." Baptism is by immersion and performed by those having authority. It is only for those who have become "accountable" for their actions, by the age of eight years and over.

Presbyterians. Ordinarily performed by sprinkling, this rite is an outward symbol of inward regeneration. While baptism is urgently recommended, it is not held to be necessary for salvation. It is customary to baptize children, but those children who die without baptism are not excluded from heaven.

Quakers. Friends believe in baptism of the Spirit but practice no form of baptism. At birth, the infant's name is recorded on the official books of the meeting to which his parents belong.

Seventh-day Adventists. All who would enter the Church are required to be baptized by immersion, the method followed by the Church of New Testament times.

Unitarians. While many Unitarians do practice baptism of infants and, more rarely, of adults, they prefer to look upon baptism as an act of dedication which has only symbolic meaning. It is possible to become a Unitarian without being baptized.

LORD'S SUPPER

Baptists. Sacraments are regarded by Baptists as simple, dignified ordinances with no supernatural significance and no sacramental value. The Communion Service is usually observed on the first Sunday of the month.

Catholics. Catholics believe that Christ is truly and substantially present in the Eucharist, body and soul, humanity and divinity, after the priest pronounces the words of consecration in the Mass. The whole substance of the bread becomes the Body of Christ, the whole substance of the wine becomes the Blood of Christ.

Christian Scientists. A Communion Service is held in all branch Churches of Christ, Scientist, twice a year. The communion celebrated is wholly spiritual, without visible elements of bread and wine.

Congregationalists. The Holy Communion is the ritual meal at which Christ is the host, and through which the Church's faith is confirmed and increased.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples hold to the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. Communion is never omitted from the Sunday service.

Episcopalians. Holy Communion, or Holy Eucharist, is the chief service of worship in the Episcopal Church, though it may not always have chief place in the Sunday service. "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."

Jehovah's Witnesses. Witnesses celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death annually on the day corresponding to *Nisan* 14 of the Jewish calendar—the day Christ instituted the celebration. They consider it unscriptural to celebrate this occasion more often than once a year.

Jews. Jews cannot accept the principle of incarnation. A cardinal tenet of Judaism is that God is purely spiritual; He admits no human attributes.

Lutherans. The Lord's Supper is an encounter of the believer with the living Lord, who is truly present in the Holy Communion to forgive sins and renew the spiritual life of believers. But no physical change takes place in the bread and wine.

Methodists. Methodists do not regard the Lord's Supper as the "real presence" of Christ in body and soul. God is a spirit; the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten only in a "heavenly and spiritual manner."

"Mormons." The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered in a simple manner "in remembrance" of the Savior and as witness that "they are willing to keep His commandments."

Presbyterians. Christ is spiritually and not physically present in Holy Communion. The Sacrament is only a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ.

Quakers. There is no necessity for any ritual to establish relationship between man and God. Friends believe in all the Sacraments but only in their inward and spiritual revelation of the Divine presence.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists celebrate the Lord's Supper in their churches about once a quarter. The consecrated bread and wine are regarded as symbols of Christ's body and blood and "show forth the Lord's death till He come."

Unitarians. Communion in Unitarian churches is a symbolic rite of remembrance and fellowship. No supernatural power of "grace" resides in this sacrament, nor does its observance automatically convey any special spiritual gift.

THE TRINITY

Baptists. The doctrine of the Trinity is accepted by Baptists, who leave its sublime mystery to interpretation by theologians.

Catholics. Catholics believe in one God, in whom there are three Divine Persons co-equal in all things. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a central mystery of the Catholic faith.

Christian Scientists. By the Trinity, Christian Scientists mean the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but do not accept the Trinity as three persons in one. Life, Truth and Love are "the triune Principle called God."

Congregationalists. Congregationalists believe fully in the Holy Trinity.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples are not bothered by speculation about the Holy Trinity and the nature of a triune God. They baptize into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as Christ commanded. They believe that the Holy Spirit is the Comforter promised in the New Testament, but they do not worry over its constitution or the nature of its operations, accepting its guidance as constantly enlarging the horizons of Christian thought.

Episcopalians. In light of man's experience of God's working in the world, it is seen that God *is* as He *reveals* Himself. He is Creative Reality (God the Father); He is Expressive Act (God the Son); He is Responsive Power (God the Holy Spirit). He is

one God experienced in a "trinitarian" fashion.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Witnesses believe that Jehovah God and Christ Jesus are two distinct persons and are not combined with a so-called "Holy Ghost" in one godhead called a Trinity.

Jews. Jews do not accept the divinity of Christ and therefore cannot accept the concept of the Trinity. The Lord is One.

Lutherans. Lutherans believe in the Trinity as one God in three personalities.

Methodists. The meaning of the Trinity is not fully understood. The doctrine is the expression of the three aspects in our experience of God: the Creator, the Father; the historical personality of Christ, the Son; a pervading and continuing presence and power in our lives, the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is also the formula for understanding the personality of God. God is Love, Love must have an object. Before Creation God must have loved Christ. The divine activity linking the Father with the object of his love is the Holy Spirit.

"Mormons." The Latter-day Saint accepts the Godhead as three literal, distinct personalities: God the Father; His Son, Jesus the Christ (who is one with the Father in purpose and in thought, but separate from Him in physical fact); and the Holy Ghost, a Personage of Spirit. This interpretation is derived from literal scriptural language.

Presbyterians. Presbyterians think of God not as three individuals, but as three manifestations of One.

Quakers. There is wide freedom for personal opinion regarding the Trinity. Friends tend to believe in the immanence of God rather than His transcendence.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—"three Persons in one God."

Unitarians. Unitarians do not believe in the Trinity but in one God.

VIRGIN BIRTH

Baptists. A great majority undoubtedly accept the Virgin Birth. A substantial minority do not. Since Baptists have no authoritarian creed to control their faith and practice, each local parish has the right to decide whether or not to make acceptance of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth a condition of church membership.

Catholics. Catholics believe in the Virgin Birth and believe that Mary remained a virgin throughout her life.

Christian Scientists. Christian Scientists accept completely the Virgin Birth.

Congregationalists. Probably the majority do not accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth; undoubtedly many do. The fact of Christ, and not the manner in which he was born, is held to be of dominant importance.

Disciples of Christ. It is probable that about ninety-nine per cent believe in the Virgin Birth; it is possible that others have doubts. There is no ecclesiastical or denominational authority that can declare one belief to be orthodox and reject the other as heretical.

Episcopalians. The creeds and the liturgy of the Episcopal Church assert the traditional belief that Jesus was born of Mary without human father. There is disagreement within the

Church, not on the *theological* meaning of the Virgin Birth, but on its biological detail. Most Episcopalians probably accept it as literally true; some regard it as symbolic in character.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Witnesses believe that Jesus was born miraculously, a virgin birth in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.

Jews. Jews do not believe in the doctrine of the Virgin Birth.

Lutherans. Lutherans affirm the Apostles' Creed as a basic summary of belief, including "born of the Virgin Mary." However, Lutherans do not go on to the extra-Biblical doctrines regarding the perpetual virginity of Mary.

Methodists. The great majority accept the Virgin Birth literally. Some would distinguish the biological aspects from the theological implications. As long as a Methodist believes in the Deity of Christ, it is not necessary for him to believe that Christ was begotten without a human father.

"Mormons." The Latter-day Saint accepts the miraculous conception of Jesus the Christ.

Presbyterians. A majority of Presbyterians undoubtedly believe in the Virgin Birth. Some find a symbolic rather than a physical meaning in the accounts of the birth of Jesus.

Quakers. The question of the Virgin Birth does not seem as important a problem for Quakers as the meaning and teaching of Christ's life on earth and His continuing power to reveal Himself at all times and to all seekers.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists accept the Virgin Birth as one of the vital truths of the Christian faith, foretold in the Old Testament and confirmed in the New.

Unitarians. Unitarians repudiate the dogma or doctrine of the Virgin Birth.

HEAVEN and HELL

Baptists. Most Baptists believe in some form of life beyond the grave. Ideas range from a nebulous, indefinable existence to a definite place, like a city of golden streets or a region of everlasting torment. Some Baptists find it difficult to reconcile the fact of an all-merciful God with endless punishment for sins committed within the short span of a lifetime on earth.

Catholics. Heaven is both a place and a state of being. The state consists essentially in seeing God "face to face." We have no knowledge of the place beyond the fact that it exists. Hell is both a place and a state of punishment. Purgatory exists to purge those souls who are not yet pure enough for heaven but have not died in a state of serious (mortal) sin.

Christian Scientists. Christian Scientists believe in heaven and hell but not in a geographical sense. In the words of Mrs. Eddy: "The sinner makes his own hell by doing evil, and the saint his own heaven by doing right."

Congregationalists. Heaven and hell are not viewed as places of bliss and torment. God's justice cannot be escaped; it will be heaven to be with God and hell to be without him.

Disciples of Christ. Practically all Disciples believe in the immortality of the soul and in a blissful reunion hereafter for all the faithful who have died in the Lord. Many doubtless believe in a literal paradise and hell. Many others are content to leave the details

of future rewards and punishments in the hands of Divine mercy. Disciple faith in general is a matter of deep personal conviction.

Episcopalians. Heaven is a state in which the vision of God is enjoyed in a "life of perfect service" of God; hell is alienation from God. Episcopalians do not believe in a physical heaven or hell; these are "states of being."

Jehovah's Witnesses. Hell is a place of rest, in hope of resurrection, not an inescapable place of torture. Heaven is the habitation of spirit creatures. The reward of spiritual life with Christ Jesus in heaven for men on earth is limited to exactly 144,000. The rest of mankind who gain life in God's new world will live forever in the paradise earth. The Devil and the willfully wicked will be permanently destroyed.

Jews. Jews believe in the immortality of the soul—an immortality whose nature is known only to God—but they no longer accept the literal idea of heaven and hell.

Lutherans. Those who live and die in faith in Christ will live with Him eternally, freed from the limitations of time and space. Predictions about this eternal life must necessarily be in picture language, for it is beyond the range of finite minds. Naïve descriptions of heaven and hell are inadequate, but victory over death is the certain destiny of God's people.

Methodists. Methodists believe in divine judgment after death. Goodness will be rewarded and evil punished. Concepts of heaven and hell vary from the concrete idea of golden streets and fiery furnaces to the more prevalent spiritual idea that heaven is the realm where the redeemed keep company with God and His Risen Son and hell is the state where such fellowship is absent.

"Mormons." Heaven is looked to and lived for as a real place of eternal progress, with endless association with loved ones, with families and friends. For those wilfully indifferent to their opportunities on earth, the knowledge that they have fallen short of their highest possible happiness will be part of the punishment of the "hell" of hereafter.

Presbyterians. Heaven and hell are not only places; they are also states of mind and character. The Bible and human experience teach us that we are living in a moral universe; therefore, sin carries its own appropriate penalty, and righteousness is its own reward, including the vision of God.

Quakers. Friends consider heaven and hell as matters for individual interpretation. They do, nonetheless, believe in life after this life.

Seventh-day Adventists. The ancient supposition that people go to heaven or hell immediately upon death is held to be an infiltration of pagan mythology into Christian theology. The dead are merely asleep until the glorious return of Christ. Then and only then will final rewards and punishments be meted out.

Unitarians. The idea that a God of Love and Mercy would want to consign a human being to eternal damnation because of wrongdoing during a relatively brief spell of mortal existence, or that God will reward the mortal doers of good with everlasting happiness appears to most Unitarians as entirely inconsistent with any moral concept of our Deity. Unitarians repudiate literal interpretations of heaven and hell as places of eternal bliss or damnation.

SIN and SALVATION

Baptists. Every true believer in Christ as personal Savior is saved—without the intervention of preacher or church. The confession of sin is a personal matter between the individual and God. Each individual must give evidence of his personal redemption by faith, good works and the Christian way of life.

Catholics. Catholics believe in original sin and in the possibility of a man's damning himself for all eternity by deliberately and knowingly disobeying the law of God. Catholics believe that men are saved by faith and good works. Salvation comes through the Church but is not limited to visible members of the Church, in the case of those who are invincibly ignorant of the Church's divine authority.

Christian Scientists. Sin is the belief in the real existence of a mind or minds other than the Divine Mind, God. Christian Scientists hold that sin is unreal. If the sinner knew this, his capacity for sinning would be destroyed. Salvation consists of being saved from the illusions and delusions of mortal sense—the sense of being capable of becoming sick and dying.

Congregationalists. Sin is opposition or indifference to the will of God. God, however, is willing to forgive. When a person repents in faith, God accepts him—then he need have no fear of any future in this world or the next. He is "saved."

Disciples of Christ. Disciples, as a rule, reject the doctrine of original sin, but most believe we are all sinful creatures unless and until redeemed by the saving sacrifice of the Lord Jesus.

Episcopalians. In man, sinner because he is ridiculously proud and self-centered, there is no real "health"; by fellowship with God in Christ, he is brought into the sphere of healthy and whole life. Salvation, therefore, means that one is given the wholeness which is God's will for man, and is delivered from arrogance and selfishness. Salvation has to do not only with the "hereafter" but also with man's present earthly existence.

Jehovah's Witness. Sin is lawlessness. The human race was born in sin because Adam and Eve rebelled against God and His law. Salvation is only possible through the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus. It will come to those who conform to the conditions upon which it is offered. All must accept Christ Jesus and obey. Those who believe will be saved but the wicked will be destroyed.

Jews. Judaism does not accept the doctrine of original sin. Nor can Judaism accept the principle of vicarious atonement—the idea of salvation *through* Christ. Every man is responsible for his own salvation. Jews approach God —each man after his own fashion—without a mediator.

Lutherans. Sin is the word describing the situation of all people as disobedient to God. Sin is not specific wrongdoing (this is the result of sin), but the basic condition of our personality. Salvation is a gift from God; even the desire for salvation comes from God, and only God can save human beings.

Methodists. When men truly and earnestly repent of their sins, God forgives them. Man's salvation comes by faith and through the grace of God. Salvation means not only security in heaven after death but a present experience of God's grace and power.

"Mormons." "Salvation," according to Latter-day Saints, is universal. How-

ever, "exaltation" (with the highest eternal opportunities) must be earned by obedience to laws, ordinances, and commandments of the Kingdom.

Presbyterians. God pardons our sins and accepts us, not for any merit of our own, but because of our faith in the perfect obedience of Christ and His sacrificial death. Forgiveness, grace, and salvation are obtained through a direct personal relationship to God. Salvation is not earned by good works but is the gift of God. Good works are the *fruits* of salvation, evidence that we are growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.

Quakers. Friends point to the inherent goodness in men and women, instead of emphasizing the inheritance of sin. The term "original sin" overemphasizes the power of evil. Even when he is fallen, man still belongs to God, who continues to appeal to the goodness within him.

Seventh-day Adventists. Salvation is by grace alone. Keeping the commandments is the result, the evidence of salvation.

Unitarians. Unitarians recognize the evil in our world and man's responsibility for much of it. They do not believe in original sin. Man has native capacities for both good and evil. His natural tendency for good can grow through proper environment, effective education, and honest effort. Unitarians believe in "salvation by character." If a man is to be "saved," the image of God within man will save him—here as well as hereafter.

DIVORCE

Baptists. Baptists do not approve of divorce except on grounds of adultery. But there is no regulation among Baptist churches regarding divorce. Each clergyman depends on his conscience in deciding whether or not to officiate at the marriage of divorced persons.

Catholics. The Church does not recognize any absolute divorce between a couple who are validly married, where one or the other would be free to marry again. Separation from bed and board may be approved.

Christian Scientists. The Church of Christ, Scientist, takes no doctrinaire position on such social questions as divorce, but leaves its members free to work out their salvation on the basis of their highest understanding of moral and spiritual law.

Congregationalists. Though the churches have never made a joint official pronouncement on divorce, they frown upon current divorce habits of Americans. They do not oppose legal divorce after a couple has been "spiritually" divorced.

Disciples of Christ. There is no central church authority on this subject. Some ministers and congregations oppose any remarriage of divorced persons. Others will remarry the innocent party to a divorce obtained on the ground of adultery. Others, perhaps a majority, believe that divorce has become a legal function of the State and will remarry anyone to whom the civil government accords the right of remarriage.

Episcopalians. In America, the "canons" (church law) do not recognize divorce but do provide a number of grounds for annulment. A bishop may permit a divorced person to remarry if certain conditions are met.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Divorce may be obtained only on the ground of marital unfaithfulness.

Jews. Divorce is permitted when love and harmony have ceased to exist between a man and a woman, and their marriage has become empty and meaningless.

Lutherans. Following the New Testament, Lutherans agree that adultery and desertion may be grounds for divorce. They feel that Christians should not legislate general principles to apply to all cases; every case must be considered individually.

Methodists. No Methodist minister should remarry a divorced person whose mate is living and unmarried, unless the person is the innocent party to a divorce on the grounds of adultery or other vicious conditions invalidating the marriage vow.

"Mormons." Divorce is deplored and discouraged. "Temple divorces" (as distinguished from civil divorces) may be granted only by the president of the Church, for serious cause, including infidelity.

Presbyterians. Divorce is permitted to the innocent party on scriptural grounds (adultery), and that party may remarry. Divorce is also permitted in cases of willful desertion. In cases of doubt, the minister can consult his Presbytery's Committee on Divorce. However, no minister may remarry persons who have been divorced less than twelve months.

Quakers. Divorce is contrary to the "Discipline of Friends." Friends' Meetings are urged not to permit weddings of divorced persons as long as one of the divorced couple is still alive.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists follow the Biblical position that adultery is the only possible ground for divorce.

Unitarians. Unitarianism recognizes no specifically theological doctrines as regards divorce. It is referred to the individual's conscience, intelligence, and common sense. The church is always ready to offer counsel and advice in keeping with its ethical and spiritual ideals.

BIRTH CONTROL

Baptists. No parish Baptist Church and no ecclesiastical convention of Baptists has ever by resolution expressed approval or disapproval of birth control. Most Baptists would resent and repudiate such a resolution as an unwarranted intrusion into the private life of husband and wife.

Catholics. The Church is opposed to birth control in the belief that artificial contraception is against the law of God and that because it is immoral, it cannot be employed as a means, even to a good end. Birth prevention is regarded as an evil in itself—circumstances cannot change it into something morally good or indifferent. "Natural" birth control—the so-called rhythm theory—is permitted (as the Pope recently stated) in cases where undue medical or economic hardship makes family limitation imperative.

Christian Scientists. Married couples are free to follow their own judgment as to having children and as to the number they will have.

Congregationalists. There is no official statement on birth control from the churches. In general, Congregationalists believe that the use by man of the brains which God has given him to invent means of preventing conception is not contrary to God's will.

Disciples of Christ. A majority of Disciple ministers believe that birth

control is justifiable under certain circumstances. In general, Disciples are content to leave such matters to the individual consciences of husband and wife.

Episcopalians. When birth control is practiced without selfish motives, it is permissible.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Birth control is regarded as an entirely personal matter.

Jews. The Jewish religion has traditionally been opposed to birth control when practiced for purely selfish reasons. It sanctions birth control if pregnancy represents a health hazard or if previous children have been born defective; modern Judaism extends this to cases of extreme poverty, inadequate living conditions.

Lutherans. There is no general objection to birth control. It can be sinful and selfish either to have an overabundance of children without considering the responsibilities involved or to avoid parenthood completely.

Methodists. The General Conference of the Methodist Church has never made an official pronouncement on birth control. Statements by individual leaders suggest that prevailing opinion approves the use of contraceptives by lawfully married couples when in the interest of the mothers' health and the children's welfare. The ultimate reason must be unselfish.

"Mormons." The Church advocates rearing large families; birth control, as commonly understood, is contrary to its teachings.

Presbyterians. The Presbyterian Church does not legislate for its people on personal issues. Nothing in the Church's teaching can be construed as forbidding an intelligent, conservative, and unselfish employment of birth control.

Quakers. Birth control is a matter for the individual conscience. Education for marriage and parenthood has long been a concern of Quakers.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists, as a denomination, have never taken an official position on the matter of birth control.

Unitarians. Unitarianism recognizes no specifically theological doctrines regarding birth control. This question is referred to the individual's conscience, intelligence, and common sense.

PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH

Baptists. The historic Baptist view holds that *every* church member and every professing Christian is an evangelist. Throughout their history, Baptists have engaged in very active missionary effort at home and abroad.

Catholics. The Catholic Church from its very beginning has sent out missionaries to all nations to make known to all men the Gospel of Christ and incorporate them into His Church. Catholicism is a world-wide religion meant for all men of all races at all times.

Christian Scientists. The Church of Christ, Scientist, engages in no formal missionary activities. However, its Board of Lectureship, its periodicals, and its radio programs are important elements in its preaching of the gospel to all men.

Congregationalists. Missionary work is carried on in the name of Christianity through preaching of the Gospel. It is not carried on to propagate Congregationalism *per se*.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples of Christ invite but do not proselytize. An offer of fellowship to any adult who wishes to take his stand by the Cross of the Risen Lord is given at the close of Sunday morning service.

Episcopalians. The Church has been active in propagation of the faith, carrying missionary work throughout the world.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Witnesses believe they have the most urgent message of all time and believe they must preach to people around the world before this generation passes away. Witnesses enter people's homes to try to convert them and they distribute literature on street corners.

Jews. Modern Judaism is not a proselytizing creed.

Lutherans. Lutherans believe that Christians are under compulsion to seek to convert all people to the Christian faith. This is a matter of doctrinal conviction.

Methodists. Methodists put much emphasis on missionary expansion and evangelistic sharing of the Gospel.

"Mormons." Missionaries have been active since the 1830's in proselytizing.

Presbyterians. Presbyterianism is a decidedly missionary faith. The central core of the missionary effort is evangelistic.

Quakers. Friends do not try to make converts; they discover those who are in unity with them and nurture them until they are accorded full membership following a written request of the applicant to become a member.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists have missionaries all over the world and publications are issued in 198 languages. Seventh-day Adventists carry on a large health and medical work alongside their evangelistic activities.

Unitarians. Unitarians do not proselytize and do not send out missionaries.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Baptists. Baptists have no hierarchy, no centralized control of religious activity, no headquarters' "oversight" of churches or liturgies, practices or regulations. The local parish church is a law unto itself.

Catholics. The Catholic Church describes itself as "the visible society founded by Jesus Christ and consisting of members throughout the world who are united by the same Faith, particularly the same Sacraments, and in spiritual matters accept the supreme authority of the Bishop of Rome (the Pope), the successor of Saint Peter." The Pope is assisted by the College of Cardinals. The Church is divided into bishoprics. Each Catholic lives under the jurisdiction of a bishop or archbishop, appointed by the Pope. Each bishopric is divided into parishes and each parish is directed by a pastor appointed by the bishop. Side by side with the parochial clergy are members of the religious orders (who may be priests, simple monks, or nuns) who engage in a variety of activities under the ultimate direction of the hierarchy.

Christian Scientists. Christian Science has no ordained clergy or personal pastors. There is no personal preacher in a Christian Science service; texts are read aloud by a first and second reader. A Christian Science practitioner is one who prays for those who ask his prayers in their behalf. To be registered as a public practitioner, one must be approved by the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Congregationalists. Congregationalists have county and state associations of churches and a national association—the General Council; but these have no power over the internal life of any of the congregations. The freedom of the congregation is inviolable. No minister beloved by his people can be removed by external pressure. No church can be disbanded except by the wish of its people.

Disciples of Christ. The average Disciple church is administered by a pastor, an Official Board of Elders and Deacons, and perhaps representatives of the Christian Women's Fellowship. Elders look after the spiritual welfare of members; deacons manage incidental business. All matters of fundamental importance must ultimately be decided by the congregation as a whole.

Episcopalians. There are three orders of ministry: bishops, priests, and deacons. There are also many orders of monks and nuns. In the United States there are parishes with elected laymen to represent the congregation; dioceses with the "convention" under which the bishop and his clergy carry on the Church's work; a general convention which meets every three years and represents the entire American Church. Neither bishops nor parish clergy have any autocratic rights; all must cooperate with the laity.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Jehovah's Witnesses are a society or body of ministers, for the public ceremony of water immersion identifies one as a minister of God. Boys and girls are invited to preach. Ministers at national headquarters and in the field are voluntary workers. The world-wide members of the Society elect seven ministers as a board of directors; the board chooses one director as president. Clerical garb is never used.

Jews. There is no religious hierarchy in Judaism. The authority of the rabbi is based not on his position but upon his learning. In Orthodox practice, the rabbi rarely leads in services; the cantor conducts worship. Any well-informed layman may rise to the pulpit to lead the congregation in prayer. The modern rabbi is responsible for religious education, for worship in the synagogue, for ceremonials surrounding birth, confirmation, marriage, and death, and for pastoral guidance. Judaism is essentially a family religion; the home is often regarded as a fitting place of worship.

Lutherans. Church conventions, which elect presidents and other officials, are the main instruments of authority in the American churches. The foundation of this authority is in the congregations themselves. Each congregation owns its own church building or other property and is self-governing in all of its local affairs. Men are called to the office of the ministry by God through the congregations, and if they cease to perform the functions of their office they cease to be ministers.

Methodists. The Methodist Church in America parallels rather uniquely the pattern of American government. The executive branch consists of a Council of Bishops elected by jurisdictional conferences composed of ministers and laymen. Each bishop presides over an area. The bishops appoint the ministers of individual parishes. The legislative power is vested in a General Conference which meets every four years and is composed of both clergy and laymen in equal numbers. Delegates are democratically elected by an annual conference and on a proportional basis. The supreme judicial power rests in a Judicial Council whose members and qualifications are determined by the General Conference of the church.

"Mormons." The Church has a strong central organization with a First Presidency of three presiding high priests followed in order by the Council of the Twelve Apostles (with assistants); a patriarch, the First Council of the Seventy; also a Presiding Bishopric who preside over the Aaronic Priesthood. Geographically, the Church is divided into "stakes" and "wards" (somewhat resembling the diocese and parishes), and "missions."

Presbyterians. The people govern the Church through elected representatives. The layman has a prominent role in the Presbyterian Church. All property is vested in laymen—not in ministers or bishops. Laymen are eligible for the highest office (moderator) in each court. The courts are the Session, made up of the elders and ministers who have supreme authority in the spiritual matters of the local church; the Presbytery, which has oversight of all congregations within its prescribed area; the Synod, composed of ministers and representative elders from congregations within a specified number of Presbyteries; and the General Assembly, which is the court of final appeal and representative of the whole church.

Quakers. Friends do not have an ordained clergy. They believe that everyone has the potentiality to become a minister. There is no division between clergy and laity because both ideas are eliminated. Elders and overseers are appointed to serve each meeting. Elders are given the "oversight" of the religious meetings for worship, for marriage, and for memorial services at time of death. Overseers look after the pastoral care of the membership. All meetings have a recorder who is responsible for the careful keeping of all vital statistics.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists have developed a global organization, comprising twelve divisions, directed by the General Conference. Each of these twelve divisions is made up of several union conferences, which in turn are made up of local conferences, each consisting of a group of churches. Lay members elect officers of their local churches and appoint delegates to local conferences for the election of their officers.

Unitarians. Unitarians practice a congregational form of government. There is no authority above the congregation itself. It sets aside a man to be the minister; the act of setting aside is regarded as ordination. Once ordained in this manner, the minister remains ordained throughout his life and can move from one congregation to another.

POSITION REGARDING OTHER RELIGIONS

Baptists. Baptists are staunch believers in the historic Baptist principle of full, complete, unrestricted religious freedom and demand it for other religions just as zealously as for themselves.

Catholics. American Catholics believe in and practice religious tolerance. However, Catholics believe that theirs is the only true religion.

Christian Scientists. The Christian Scientist does not feel superior to the adherents of any denomination. Every man is free to demonstrate the efficacy of his own faith; each is entitled to encouragement in his pursuit of spiritual objectives.

Congregationalists. Congregationalists believe in cooperation among the Christian denominations and encourage exchanges of ideas with Jewish groups. In any community they oppose religious isolationism and denominational exclusiveness.

Disciples of Christ. Disciples do not believe theirs is the only true religion; they do believe it is most nearly in accord with the practices of the early Christian churches. They never doubt the right of any man to go directly to God, by prayer, for guidance in all problems of conscience. They have no sense of rivalry among the denominations.

Episcopalians. The Church is Christ's instrument for fulfilling His purpose in the world and the means by which His continuing presence is made available. Of that one Church, Episcopalians believe they are a part; they have never claimed they are the *only* part.

Jehovah's Witnesses. Witnesses believe that theirs is the only true faith and that there is only one way to gain salvation. They do not believe that the majority of people will meet the strict requirements of true faith.

Jews. Jews do not presume to judge the honest worshiper of any faith. "The righteous of *all* nations are worthy of immortality."

Lutherans. Lutherans believe there is only one church, but it is not any visible institution. It consists of all the congregations of believers which rightly teach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. Lutherans are eager for better understanding and cooperation among Christians everywhere.

Methodists. Methodist leaders encourage tolerance and understanding toward all other religious bodies.

"Mormons." The "Mormon" believes his is the "right way." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints affirms it is the "restored" Church of Jesus Christ, with the same authority, organization, and ordinances that Jesus established on earth but which were lost by centuries of change and apostasy.

Presbyterians. Presbyterians believe that every man has the right to choose and practice the faith that he personally accepts.

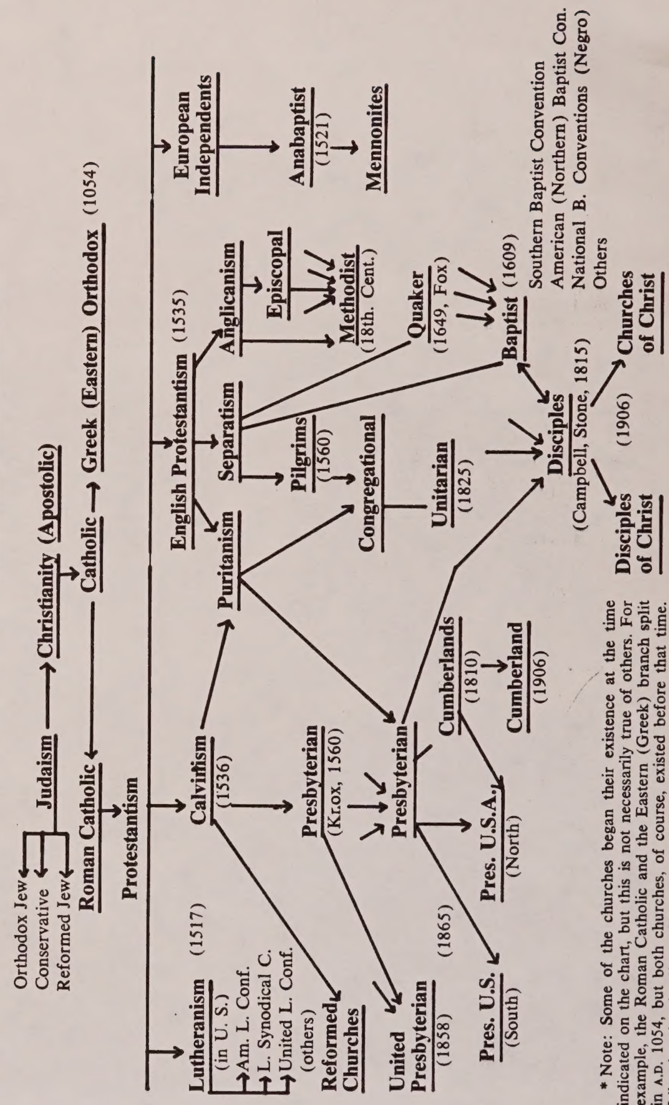
Quakers. To Friends, all those who do the will of the Father are brethren of Jesus in the Spirit. In their attitude toward other religions, Friends have considered that they are members of one household in the family of God.

Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists are ardent champions of religious liberty. They are opposed to all religious legislation such as "blue" laws and support the principle of separation of church and state.

Unitarians. Unitarians are firm believers in the "Church Universal," which includes all men and women of every race, color, and creed who seek God and worship Him through service to their fellow man. Every individual has the right to approach God in his own way; every religious community has the duty of creating such patterns of worship as best serve the needs of those who worship.

3. Chart: Genealogy of Major Judaeo-Christian Bodies in the United States *

By Robert Winston Carden, Professor, Schreiner Institute, Kerrville, Texas



* Note: Some of the churches began their existence at the time indicated on the chart, but this is not necessarily true of others. For example, the Roman Catholic and the Eastern (Greek) branch split in A.D. 1054, but both churches, of course, existed before that time. Likewise the Anglican Church (Church of England) did not originate in A.D. 1535, but it was in that year that it pulled out from the authority of Rome.

Holy Communion: Place and Preparation

The Holy Communion is the chief service of the church. It is known by many names, including the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the Lord's Supper. By whatever name, this sacrament is the feast of the baptized family of God, gathered around the table of the Lord. In Holy Baptism we are initiated into God's family; in Holy Communion we are sustained in that family. In Holy Baptism we are made part of the priesthood of all believers; in Holy Communion we are nourished and strengthened to carry out our priesthood of witness and service in the world. In Holy Baptism we are joined to our Lord's death and resurrection; in Holy Communion we both proclaim his death and celebrate the feast of his victory.

The altar guild has a special and privileged responsibility to prepare for this celebration which is so central to Christian worship. It is important for guild members to grow continually in the meaning of the Eucharist, as well to be thoroughly familiar with the names and use of eucharistic vessels and linens.

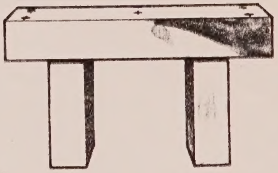
The Altar

The focal point of the worship space is the altar, the table of the Lord. More than any other furnishing, the altar symbolizes God's constant presence in his church. The altar is therefore the center of the church's life, both architecturally and liturgically.

The term altar is derived from the Latin word *alta,* which means high. The altar is usually on a raised platform known as a predella. Its height both enhances the dignity and the significance of the altar, and enables the assembled congregation to see the actions at the altar.

The altar is the table for the Holy Communion meal—the place where the eucharistic feast is celebrated and around which God's baptized family gathers to share this feast. In the early church the altar was free-standing, and the presiding minister faced the people for the eucharistic celebration. During later centuries when theology began to deteriorate, people were often considered unworthy to commune. The altar was moved against the east wall of the church, often far away from the congregation. The priest celebrated the Eucharist with his back to the people.

Luther and the Reformation helped restore the Holy Communion to the people, and finally we are again seeing altars placed in a free-standing position as tables. In this position, the ministers stand behind the altar for the Great Thanksgiving in the Holy Communion liturgy, facing the people in a more courteous, hospitable, and intimate relationship. The free-standing altar witnesses to the meal character and fellowship of the Eucharist.



The top of the altar is known as the mensa, which means table. The height of the mensa is thirty-nine inches, and it is usually rectangular or square. Five Greek crosses are inscribed into the top of the mensa, one at each corner and one in the center. The crosses represent the five wounds of our crucified Lord.

The mensa is used only as the table for the eucharistic feast.

Nothing is placed on it except altar linens, the missal stand, eucharistic vessels, and sometimes candles.

Altars which are not free-standing often have a retable, which is a small shelf above the back of the mensa. On the retable (which is sometimes also called a gradine) may be placed the altar cross, flower vases, and candles. Flower vases are not placed on the mensa itself.

Older churches often have a reredos, which is a high extension of the retable, made of carved wood or stone. When there is no reredos, an ornamental cloth known as a dossal is sometimes used as background for an altar which is not free-standing.

Altar Linens

Three linens are traditionally used to vest the altar, marking it as the table of the Lord. They are on the altar at all times, except that they are removed at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, and the altar remains bare on Good Friday.

Cerecloth

The first linen placed on the mensa (the top of the altar) is the cerecloth. When the altar is stone, the cerecloth is waxed or otherwise waterproofed to prevent dampness from staining the other linens and from damaging the various vessels. Otherwise it is simply a heavy linen and helps protect the mensa. The cerecloth measures the exact dimensions of the top of the mensa.

When the cerecloth is removed from the altar, it is rolled carefully in order to prevent wrinkles, which in a waxed fabric may be impossible to remove.

Protector Linen

Over the cerecloth is often placed a second linen, to which the altar parament(s) may be sewn. This protector linen is the same depth as the mensa and the same width as the parament.

Fair Linen

The fair linen is the most important of the altar linens, because it represents the burial linen or shroud in which our

Lord's body was wrapped after his crucifixion. The word *fair* refers to the fine quality and cleanliness of this linen. Thus, because of its symbolism and because it is very visible to the worshiping assembly, the fair linen should always be spotless and fresh. Each church will find it necessary to own at least two fair linens, so that one is always clean and ready to use. When laundered, the fair linen is never folded.

The fair linen is the same depth as the top of the mensa, but its length may vary, depending on the altar and its paraments. Often the fair linen extends over the ends of the mensa one-third or two-thirds the height of the altar, or it may be the same length as the mensa. Generous hems (as much as two inches) help the fair linen hang straight and lie flat.

Traditionally, five Greek crosses are embroidered in white on the fair linen—one in the center, and one near each corner of the mensa. The five crosses symbolize the five wounds of Christ.

It is not appropriate to place lace edges on the fair linen.

Sacramental Linens

Four additional linens are used for the celebration of the Holy Communion: the corporal, the pall, purificators, and the veil. These linens are carried in a burse.

Corporal

The corporal is a square of fine linen which is laid by an assisting minister on the center of the altar over the fair linen during the offertory. The eucharistic vessels are then set on the corporal. This linen is sometimes interpreted to symbolize the linen placed over the face of Christ for his burial. The corporal is one of the most ancient altar linens used for Christian worship.

Depending on the depth of the altar, the corporal is usually about twenty inches square. A small Greek cross is usually embroidered in white near the center front edge.

The corporal is folded and ironed inside out in thirds each way (forming nine squares), so that it can be unfolded on the

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

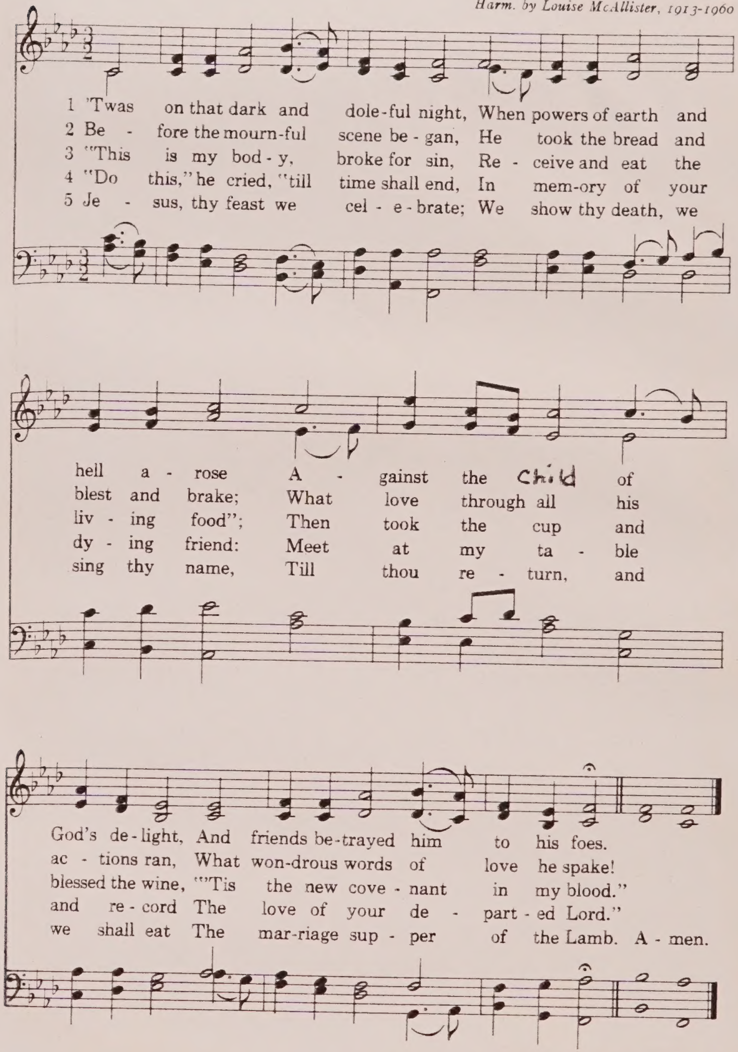
Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

'Twas on That Dark and Doleful Night

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

BOURBON L.M.
Melody, "Hesperian Harp," 1848
Harm. by Louise McAllister, 1913-1960



Assertiveness Training

Some people think that assertiveness training turns nice people into irascible complainers or calculating manipulators. Not so. It's your right to protect yourself when something seems unfair. You are the one who best knows your discomfort and your needs.

Here is a partial list of traditional assumptions you may have learned as a child which now keep you from being an assertive adult. Each of these mistaken assumptions violates one of your legitimate rights as an adult individual:

Mistaken Traditional Assumptions	Your Legitimate Rights
1. It is selfish to put your needs before others' needs.	You have a right to put yourself first, sometimes.
2. It is shameful to make mistakes. You should have an appropriate response for every occasion.	You have a right to make mistakes.
3. If you can't convince others that your feelings are reasonable, then they must be wrong, or maybe you are going crazy.	You have a right to be the final judge of your feelings and accept them as legitimate.
4. You should respect the views of others, especially if they are in a position of authority. Keep your differences of opinion to yourself. Listen and learn.	You have a right to have your own opinions and convictions.
5. You should always try to be logical and consistent.	You have a right to change your mind or decide on a different course of action.
6. You should be flexible and adjust. Others have good reasons for their actions and it's not polite to question them.	You have a right to protest unfair treatment or criticism.
7. You should never interrupt people. Asking questions reveals your stupidity to others.	You have a right to interrupt in order to ask for clarification.

8. Things could get even worse, don't rock the boat.	You have a right to negotiate for change.
9. You shouldn't take up others' valuable time with your problems.	You have a right to *ask* for help or emotional support.
10. People don't want to hear that you feel bad, so keep it to yourself.	You have a right to feel and express pain.
11. When someone takes the time to give you advice, you should take it very seriously. They are often right.	You have a right to ignore the advice of others.
12. Knowing that you did something well is its own reward. People don't like show-offs. Successful people are secretly disliked and envied. Be modest when complimented.	You have a right to receive formal recognition for your work and achievements.
13. You should always try to accommodate others. If you don't, they won't be there when you need them.	You have a right to say "no."
14. Don't be anti-social. People are going to think you don't like them if you say you'd rather be alone instead of with them.	You have a right to be alone, even if others would prefer your company.
15. You should always have a good reason for what you feel and do.	You have a right not to have to justify yourself to others.
16. When someone is in trouble, you should help them.	You have a right not to take responsibility for someone else's problem.
17. You should be sensitive to the needs and wishes of others, even when they are unable to tell you what they want.	You have a right not to have to anticipate others' needs and wishes.
18. It's always a good policy to stay on people's good side.	You have a right not to always worry about the goodwill of others.
19. It's not nice to put people off. If questioned, give an answer.	You have a right to choose not to respond to a situation.
20. You should be understanding and overlook trivial irritations. Don't be a bitch and complain.	You have a right to feel and express anger.

ASSERTIVENESS QUESTIONAIRE

Most people experience some difficulty with expressing themselves assertively in some situations and with some people. This checklist will help you understand your own level of assertiveness in specific situations. Indicate using the following rating codes how difficult it is for you to assertively express yourself in each situation with the people listed at the top of each column.

RATING CODES

Level of difficulty/discomfort

1 = none
2 = a little
3 = a fair amount
4 = much
5 = very much

	my parent	my kid	signif. other	friend	acquaintance	stranger	supervisee	authority figure
admit feeling angry								
admit feeling sad								
admit feeling afraid								
admit feeling happy								
ask for nurturance/ support								
ask her/him to listen to me								
ask her/him to say s/he loves me								
handle her/his saying s/he loves me								
ask for cooperation								
tell her/him when s/he has hurt my feelings								
tell her/him I want her/him to treat me with respect								
deal with attempts to make me feel guilty								

	my parent	my kid	signif. other	friend	acquain-tance	stran-ger	super-visee	authority figure
say I want to make my own choices/mistakes								
speak up about what s/he does that bothers/annoys me								
tell her/him I do not want to visit her/him								
tell her/him I want her /him to leave								
handle her/his anger								
handle her/his sadness								
handle her/his fear								
handle her/his happi-ness								
set a limit when s/he wants support I do not want to give								
turn off a talkative person								
suggest s/he get professional help with a problem								
ask her/him for more time or attention								
ask to be left alone for a while								
tell her/him I am too busy to do something for her/him								
ask her/him to do a fair share of the chores/workload								
ask for time to rest								
ask for time to play and have fun								

	my parent	my kid	signif. other	friend	acquain- tance	stran- ger	super- visee	authority figure
request a meeting or date								
turn down a request for a meeting/date								
resist sexual over- tures when I am not interested								
ask for approval for what I have done well								
give a compliment								
receive a compliment								
ask for constructive criticism								
apologize when I am at fault								
admit confusion and ask for clarification								
admit confusion and ask for clarification								
admit ignorance in some area								
initiate a conversation								
propose an idea								
express a difference of opinion								
handle sexist, racist, homophobic, etc. remarks								
ask for directions								
ask a personal question								
ask for a favor								

	my parent	my kid	signif. other	friend	acquain-tance	stran-ger	super-visee	authority figure
turn down a request for a favor								
ask her/him to do something for free								
ask to borrow money								
turn down a request to borrow money								
ask to borrow a car, coat, etc.								
turn down a request to borrow a car, etc.								
request the return of borrowed items								

Other situations:

ask for a raise

talk when all eyes are on me

take charge

resist sales pressure

ask for good service

protest a "rip off"

return defective items

introduce myself to a stranger

tell her/him I don't remember her/his name

ask a stranger not to get in line in front of me

BASIC ASSERTIVE RIGHTS

1. The right to act in ways that promote your dignity, self-respect, well-being, and growth--even if it hurts someone else--as long as others' rights are not violated in the process.
2. The right to be treated fairly and with respect.
3. The right to say no and not feel guilty.
4. The right to experience and express your feelings and thoughts.
5. The right to take time to slow down and think.
6. The right to change your mind.
7. The right to ask for what you need/want.
8. The right to ask for information or clarification.
9. The right to set your own priorities, without having to justify yourself.
10. The right to do less than you are humanly capable of doing.
11. The right to make mistakes.
12. The right to stand up for your rights and to seek remedies when they are violated.
13. The right to choose not to assert yourself.

Zuker, E. (1983) Mastering Assertiveness Skills. New York: AMACOM

Table 4. Unassertive versus assertive responses to typical work situations.

Current Unassertive Behavior	*Current Belief About Results*	*Desired Assertive Behavior*	*New Assertive Belief About Results*
I have an employee who isn't performing up to standards. I'm reluctant to tell her.	If I tell her she'll get upset and resent me.	I'll tell her clearly and specifically what my expectations are, and how she is meeting them, as well as how she's not.	She will welcome the feedback—she wants to know how she's doing, and how she can improve.
I give my subordinates a great deal of detail and instructions about how to do the work.	They'll become confused and do it wrong or inadequately. They'll take it personally.	I'll give them only as much information and detail as they need.	They will feel more trusted and have a chance to use their talent and creativity. They will see that I am criticizing the work, *not* criticizing them personally.
When I'm in a meeting with my peers, I don't speak up or express my opinions.	I'm afraid my ideas will be seen as stupid or unrealistic. !	I will challenge others' ideas if I think they lack merit, and also present my own.	My ideas are solid and interesting. I have many worthwhile contributions to make. Even if people don't agree with me, they will still respect me for participating.
One of my peers is much more knowledgeable than I am. I hesitate to call on her for advice or information.	She will find out how ignorant I am and use it against me.	When I need information, I will ask her for it.	She will be flattered that I value her input; she'll use me as a resource when she needs to.
I never disagree with my male colleagues in meetings.	They will say I'm a pushy, aggressive female.	I will disagree when I see things another way.	They will respect my honesty. They will trust me to say what I feel and not to mask it with politeness.
When my boss gives me a project that I know I can't complete on time, I'm reluctant to say so. I go away and worry about it—or do it and neglect other important work.	He will think I'm a poor manager, lazy or inefficient. He will be angry, and never again consider me for important work.	When I get a new project and cannot deliver it realistically by the deadline my boss tells me, I will speak up right away, let the boss know my situation, and try to negotiate a satisfactory solution.	He will appreciate knowing the situation now, rather than finding the project not done at the last moment. He will respect my assertiveness and realistic assessment of the situation.
In a meeting with my boss and other members of our department, I am afraid to let on that I don't know something. Usually, I just nod; then I am unclear about what I'm expected to do.	She (and they) will think I'm stupid—and inexperienced.	When I don't understand or don't hear something, I will question until I do.	She will welcome the fact that I'm paying attention and will want to understand exactly what's expected of me. She will respect me for taking the time to get clear on my duties.
When colleagues ask me for a favor, I hardly ever say no.	If I say no, they'll be upset and angry, and they won't want to be my friend.	I will say no when I feel I don't want to comply with the demand or request.	They will have a clearer understanding of my limits—and respect me. They will find it easier to say no to me. Our relationship will become more honest.
I don't ask for what I want—with my boss and colleagues.	They will think I'm greedy or pushy. They will say no.	I will ask for what I want. Even though I may not get it, I will have stated clearly what I want.	They may say yes to me. Whether or not they do, they will see me as a person who has self-repect, and they will respect me.
I hesitate and "sit on the fence." I ask everybody else's opinion. I hardly ever make a decision.	1. Someone will prove me wrong. 2. I'll have to change my mind. 3. I'll look silly or, worse, incompetent.	I will make a decision when I have a reasonable amount of information, even though I may be wrong.	1. I may turn out to be wrong, but it's okay to make mistakes. 2. If I change my mind, that will be a sign of my flexibility as a good manager. 3. I'll look even sillier and more incompetent by sitting on the fence and not taking a stand.

From *Asserting Yourself: A Practical Guide for Positive Change* (1985). Bower, S.A. + Bower G.H Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley

Downer behavior	*Put-down sentence*	*Suggested assertive reply*
Nagging about details	"Haven't you done this yet?"	"No, when did you want it done?" (Answer without hedging, and follow up with a question.)
Prying	"I know I maybe shouldn't ask, but. . ."	"If I don't want to answer, I'll let you know." (Indicate that you won't make yourself uncomfortable just to please this person.)
Lecturing, Pollyanna style	"We should be more cooperative, so there won't be so much tension."	"How can we be more cooperative?" (Ask for concrete examples of the behavior being urged.)
Putting you on the spot socially	"Are you busy Tuesday?"	"What do you have in mind?" (Answer the question with a question.)
Questioning the value of your choices	"Are you sure this course really relates to your job?"	"I think it relates to me and therefore to my job." (Emphasize your right to make personal judgments.)
Giving unwanted advice	"If I were you. . ."	"But you aren't!" (Cut off the advice by denying the "if.")
Pigeonholing you	"That's a woman for you!"	"That's *one* woman, not *all* women." (Disagree — assert your individuality.)
Using insulting labels for your behavior	"That's a dumb way to. . ."	"I'll decide what to call my behavior." (Refuse to accept the label.)
Basing predictions on an amateur personality analysis	"You'll have a hard time. You're too shy."	"In what ways do you think I'm 'too shy'?" (Ask for clarification of of the analysis.)
		"You're entitled to your opinion — but I think I can do it." (Indicate that you feel capable of judging your own strengths.)

TYPES OF ASSERTION

Basic assertion

A simple statement in which you stand up for personal rights, opinions, feelings, or beliefs.

> Example: (Your friend wants to borrow your car and you do not want to lend it to him): No, I really do not want to lend it to you.
>
> Example: I like you a lot.
>
> Example: (Returning a defective radio): I'd like my money back on this radio.
>
> Example: (Your father gives you unwanted advice): I do not want any more advice.

Empathic assertion

In some situations you may want to not only express your feelings or needs, but also express some sensitivity to the other person. In this type of assertion, you make a statement that gives genuine recognition of the other person's feelings or situation and follow this statement with another that stands up for your own rights.

> Example: (dealing with attempt to make you feel guilty) I know you feel that I did not treat you fairly when I gave you that evaluation, but I think it accurately assessed your strengths and weaknesses.
>
> Example: (asking your significant other to leave you alone for a while) This may be hard for you and I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I want to be alone for a while. Let's plan to spend some time together tonight.
>
> Example: I know you need help and only feel comfortable talking to me, but since I do not feel qualified to handle this type of problem, I would rather you find someone else to talk to. I think you might benefit from seeing a therapist.

Escalating assertion

If your prior assertive responses have not been successful in modifying the other person's violation of your rights, you may need to escalate the firmness of your assertion. You may begin with a request and intensify your assertion until it is a demand, or escalate from a statement of preference to an outright refusal. It is helpful if you give the other person a matter-of-fact warning of what your final assertion will be prior to expressing it.

Example: I'm flattered you think I am good looking, I'm not interested in being involved with you.

No thank you. Please leave me alone.

If you do not leave me alone I will report your behavior to our boss.

(Follow through on the report if your demand is not honored)

Confrontive assertion

This consists of stating how the other person's words differ from her/his deeds. In a matter-of-fact manner, describe what the other person said would be done, then what actually happened. Finally, express what you want.

Example: You said you would stop being late for this meeting, but you have been late for the last three weeks. I want you to make this meeting a top priority and get her on time no matter what comes up.

Example: I thought we had agreed that you would take care of keeping the kitchen clean. There have been dirty dishes in the sink for the last week and the garbage has piled up. Please wash the dishes and take out the garbage today.

I-language assertion

This type of statement is helpful when expressing difficult feelings. It is typically composed of four parts: 1) objectively describe the other person's behavior, 2) its effect on you, 3) your feelings, and 4) what you want. Sometimes a part may be eliminated or combined with another part.

Example: When we were at that party, you referred three times to my having gained too much weight. Other people laughed, but I felt embarrassed and angry when you did that. Please do not do that again in front of other people.

ASSERTIVENESS TECHNIQUES

Fogging

This is helpful when you are being criticized or manipulated. Respond like a fog bank: let the comments go through you without offering resistance. You can do this by agreeing with any truth in what the the other person says, while refusing to let the comments control your feelings or behavior.

Example:

(her) You always wear clothes that do not match.
(you) Yes, I do wear clothes that don't match.
(her) Don't you know that other people will think you don't have any taste?
(you) I do know that other people might think that.

Broken record

This technique helps you stand your ground with manipulative people. Simply repeat one or two sentences stating your stance over and over. Use the same words and the same tone of voice persistently.

Example:

(him) This is a wonderful car. You should buy it tonight.
(you) I do not want to buy it.
(him) How much do you want to spend?
(you) I do not want to buy a car.
(him) Well, what if I give you a great deal on this one?
(you) I do not want to buy a car.

Shift the problem to the owner of the problem

Inform the other person that you are not the source or owner of the problem and that you are not willing to suffer as a result of a problem that is not of your making.

Example:

(her) I never get to go anywhere because you are always working.
(you) It is okay with me for you to go out with your friends.
(her) I don't want to go without you.
(you) I know it is hard for you to do things alone, but it is up to you to change this situation if you are unhappy with it.

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

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WEEK 2: SPEAKING SO THAT OTHERS CAN HEAR

TEXT: Acts 2:1-13

The day of Pentecost is traditionally referred to as the birth of the church. It was on Pentecost that the disciples shared the good news they had received and experienced with people of the then known world. It was on Pentecost that the disciples first lived the gospel injunction to preach good news and make disciples.

As we study this text, we are often drawn to the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit as the sound of blowing wind, the appearance of tongues of fire, and the speaking of different languages. These manifestations were particularly meaningful images to ancient Jews who knew stories of God's presence experienced through the wind by Elijah, the pillar of fire at night by the Israelites in the dessert, and the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel. The presence of God was made known to the disciples in ways which they could understand.

So it is for us today. God does not come in a manner which is incomprehensible to us. God makes manifest Divine Life in ways which we can perceive, hear, and understand. To do otherwise would be unfair of God.

As we share our faith with others, we are called to share our experience of God so that they will understand. Often people of faith use their own vocabulary and idioms in incomprehensible and confusing ways when speaking with others. If the other doesn't respond, it is often the other who is blamed for not taking advantage of the opportunity of experiencing God's grace. Instead, it is the responsibility of believers to meet people where they are and to accept others for who they are.

The example of Pentecost is one of God being present to the disciples so that they could grasp and respond to that presence. In turn, the disciples went out and shared this experience speaking plainly, in languages the others could understand.

1. In what ways has the presence of God been made manifest to you in your own life situation?

2. Imagine a person who is very different from you socially, culturally, economically, or in other ways. How could you share the experience of God's presence in your own life with such a person in ways that person would understand? Give concrete examples.

3. How can your church learn to share its faith with those who are different? Using the example of Pentecost, what "languages" do you need to speak that are not your own?

An Alternate Lectionary with Psalter[5]

ADVENT: YEAR A (*1992, 1995*)

1st Sunday	Ps. 122	562[6]	Isa. 2:1-5	Rom. 13:8-14	Matt. 24:36-44
2nd Sunday	Ps. 72:1-19	597	Isa. 11:1-10	Rom. 15:4-13	Matt. 3:1-12
3rd Sunday	Ps. 146	612	Isa. 35:1-10	James 5:7-10	Matt. 11:2-11
4th Sunday	Ps. 24	561	Isa. 7:10-15	Rom. 1:1-7	Matt. 1:18-25

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR A (*1992, 1995*)

Christmas	Ps. 96	585	Isa. 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-15	Luke 2:1-14
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Eccl. 3:1-9, 14-17[7]	Col. 3:12-21	Matt. 2:13-15, 19-23
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Isa. 61:10–62:3[8]	Eph. 1:3-6, 15-18	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR A (*1993, 1996*)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Matt. 3:13-17
2nd Sunday	Ps. 40:1-11	568	Isa. 49:1-7	I Cor. 1:1-9	John 1:29-34
3rd Sunday	Ps. 27:1,4, 13-14	563	Isa. 9:1-4	I Cor. 1:10-17	Matt. 4:12-23
4th Sunday	Ps. 1	554	Zeph. 2:3; 3:11-13	I Cor. 1:26-31	Matt. 5:1-12
5th Sunday	Ps. 112:4-9	599	Isa. 58:5-12	I Cor. 2:1-5	Matt. 5:13-16
6th Sunday	Ps. 119:1-16	564	Deut. 30:15-20[9]	I Cor. 2:6-13	Matt. 5:17-37
7th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	587	Lev. 19:1-2, 15-18	I Cor. 3:10-11, 16-23	Matt. 5:38-48
8th Sunday	Ps. 62	573	Isa. 49:8-18	I Cor. 4:1-5	Matt. 6:24-34
Last Sunday	Ps. 2:6-11	584	Exod. 24:12, 15-18	I Cor. 12:31–13:13	Matt. 17:1-9

LENT: YEAR A (*1993, 1996*) *installations, etc.*

Ash Wednesday	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	II Cor. 5:20b–6:10 (*6:1*)	Matt. 6:1-6, 16-21
1st Sunday	Ps. 130	581	Gen. 2:7-9, 15-17; 3:1-7a	Rom. 5:12-19	Matt. 4:1-11
2nd Sunday	Ps. 33:12-22	569	Gen. 12:1-8	Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17	John 4:5-26
3rd Sunday	Ps. 95:1-2, 6-11	558	Exod. 17:3-7	Rom. 8:1-5	John 4:27-42
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	598	I Sam. 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a	Eph. 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
5th Sunday	Ps. 116:1-9	615	Ezek. 37:1-3, 11-14	Rom. 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
Palm Sunday	Ps. 22:1-11	559	Isa. 50:4-9a	Phil. 2:5-11	Matt. 26:14–27:66

LENT: YEAR A (cont'd.)

Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15,17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Exod. 12:1-14	I Cor. 11:23-26	John 13:1-15
Good Friday	Ps. 22:1-18	559	Isa. 52:13–53:12	Heb. 4:14-16; 5:7-9	John 18:1–19:42

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR A (*1993, 1996*)

Easter Eve: Gen. 1:1–2:2 Ps. 33:1-11 Gen. 22:1-18 Ps. 33:12-22 Exod. 14:15–15:1 Exod. 15:1-6, 17-18 Isa. 54:5-14 Ps. 30:2-6, 11-13 Isa. 55:1-11 Isa. 12:2-6 Ezek. 36:16-28 Ps. 42:1-7; 43:3-4 Zeph. 3:14-17, 19-20 Ps. 98 Rom. 6:3-11 Ps. 114 Matt. 28:1-10

Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Acts 10:34-43	Col. 3:1-11	John 20:1-9
2nd Sunday	Ps. 105:1-7	605	Acts 2:42-47	I Pet. 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 16	600	Acts 2:22-32	I Pet. 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	560	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	I Pet. 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
5th Sunday	Ps. 33:1-11	565	Acts 6:1-7	I Pet. 2:1-10	John 14:1-14
6th Sunday	Ps. 66:1-7, 16-20	576	Acts 8:4-8, 14-17	I Pet. 3:8-18	John 14:15-21
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Matt. 28:16-20
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 1:12-14	I Pet. 4:12-19	John 17:1-11
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Acts 2:1-21	I Cor. 12:4-13	John 20:19-23

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (*1993, 1996*)

1st Sunday	Ps. 150	555	Exod. 34:4-6, 8-9	II Cor. 13:5-13	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Ps. 31:1-5, 19-24	606	Deut. 11:18-21, 26-28	Rom. 3:21-28	Matt. 7:21-29
3rd Sunday	Ps. 50:1-15	570	Hos. 6:1-6	Rom. 4:18-25	Matt. 9:9-13
4th Sunday	Ps. 100	611	Exod. 19:2-6a	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 9:35–10:8
5th Sunday	Ps. 69:1-18, 34-36	574	Jer. 20:7-13	Rom. 5:12-15	Matt. 10:26-33
6th Sunday	Ps. 89:1-4, 15-18	557	II Kings 4:8-16	Rom. 6:1-11	Matt. 10:34-42
7th Sunday	Ps. 145	602	Zech. 9:9-13	Rom. 7:21–8:6	Matt. 11:25-30
8th Sunday	Ps. 65	575	Isa. 55:10-13	Rom. 8:18-25	Matt. 13:1-23
9th Sunday	Ps. 86:11-17	556	II Sam. 7:18-22[10]	Rom. 8:26-27	Matt. 13:24-43
10th Sunday	Ps. 119:129-36	594	I Kings 3:5-12	Rom. 8:28-30	Matt. 13:44-52
11th Sunday	Ps. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Neh. 9:16-20	Rom. 8:35-39	Matt. 14:13-21

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (cont'd.)

12th Sunday	Ps. 85:8-13	566	I Kings 19:9-18	Rom. 9:1-5	Matt. 14:22-33
~~13th Sunday~~	~~Ps. 67~~	~~567~~	~~Isa. 56:1, 6-8~~	~~Rom. 11:13-16, 29-32~~	~~Matt. 15:21-28~~
14th Sunday	Ps. 138	578	Isa. 22:15-16, 19-23	Rom. 11:33-36	Matt. 16:13-20
15th Sunday	Ps. 26	586	Jer. 15:15-21	Rom. 12:1-8	Matt. 16:21-28
16th Sunday	Ps. 119:33-40	604	Ezek. 33:7-11	Rom. 12:9-18	Matt. 18:15-20
17th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	588	Gen. 4:13-16[11]	Rom. 14:5-9	Matt. 18:21-35
18th Sunday	Ps. 27:1-9	601	~~Isa. 55:6-11~~	Phil. 1:21-27	Matt. 20:1-16
19th Sunday	Ps. 25:1-10	603	Ezek. 18:25-32	Phil. 2:1-11	Matt. 21:28-32
20th Sunday	Ps. 80:7-15, 18-19	607	Isa. 5:1-7	Phil. 4:4-9	Matt. 21:33-43
21st Sunday	Ps. 23	579	Isa. 25:6-10*a*	Phil. 4:12-20	Matt. 22:1-14
22nd Sunday	Ps. 96	595	Isa. 45:1-7	I Thess. 1:1-5	Matt. 22:15-22
23rd Sunday	Ps. 18:1-3, 46, 50	596	Exod. 22:21-27	I Thess. 1:2-10	Matt. 22:34-46
24th Sunday	Ps. 131	593	Mal. 1:14*b*–2:2*b*, 8-10	I Thess. 2:7-13	Matt. 23:1-12
25th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-7	589	Song of Sol. 3:1-5[12]	I Thess. 3:7-13	Matt. 24:1-14
26th Sunday	Ps. 128	613	Prov. 31:10-12, 20, 26-31	I Thess. 4:13-18	Matt. 25:1-13
27th Sunday	Ps. 105:1-7	564	Jer. 26:1-6	I Thess. 5:1-10	Matt. 25:14-15, 19-30
Last Sunday	Ps. 95:1-7	582	Ezek. 34:11-17	I Cor. 15:20-28	Matt. 25:31-46
All Saints'	Ps. 24:1-6	566	Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	Rev. 7:9-17	Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Ps. 80:1-7	562	Isa. 63:16–64:8	I Cor. 1:3-9	Mark 13:32-37
2nd Sunday	Ps. 85	597	Isa. 40:1-11	II Pet. 3:8-14	Mark 1:1-8
3rd Sunday	Luke 1:46*b*-55	612	Isa. 61:1-4, 8-11	I Thess. 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
4th Sunday	Ps. 89:1-4, 14-18	561	II Sam. 7:1-5, 7-16	Rom. 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Christmas	Ps. 98	585	Isa. 62:6-12	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:15-20
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Jer. 31:10-13[13]	Heb. 2:10-18	Luke 2:22-40
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Isa. 61:10–62:3[14]	Rev. 21:22–22:2	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Mark 1:4-11

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (cont'd.)

2nd Sunday	Ps. 67	568	I Sam. 3:1-10	I Cor. 6:12-20	John 1:35-42
3rd Sunday	Ps. 62:5-12	563	Jon. 3:1-5, 10	I Cor. 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
4th Sunday	Ps. 1	554	Deut. 18:15-22	I Cor. 7:32-35	Mark 1:21-28
5th Sunday	Ps. 147:1-12	599	Job 7:1-7	I Cor. 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
6th Sunday	Ps. 32	564	Lev. 13:1-2, 44-46	I Cor. 10:31–11:1	Mark 1:40-45
7th Sunday	Ps. 41	587	Isa. 43:15-25	II Cor. 1:18-22	Mark 2:1-12
8th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	573	Hos. 2:14-23	II Cor. 3:1*b*-6	Mark 2:18-22
Last Sunday	Ps. 50:1-6	584	II Kings 2:1-12*a*	II Cor. 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9

LENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Ash Wednesday	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	James 1:12-18	Mark 2:15-20
1st Sunday	Ps. 25:3-9	581	Gen. 9:8-15	I Pet. 3:18-22	Mark 1:12-15
2nd Sunday	Ps. 115:1, 9-18	569	Gen. 28:10-17	Rom. 8:31-34	Mark 10:32-45
3rd Sunday	Ps. 19:7-14	558	Exod. 20:1-17	I Cor. 1:22-25	John 2:13-22
4th Sunday	Ps. 137:1-6	598	II Chron. 36:14-21	Eph. 2:1-10	John 3:14-21
5th Sunday	Ps. 51:10-16	615	Jer. 31:31-34	Heb. 5:7-10	John 12:20-33
Palm Sunday	Ps. 22:7-8, 16-19, 22-23	559	Zech. 9:9-12	Phil. 2:5-11	Mark 14:1–15:47
Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9*a*	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Deut. 16:1-8	I Cor. 10:16-21	Mark 14:12-26
Good Friday	Ps. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Lam. 1:7-12	Heb. 10:14-18	Luke 23:33-46

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Easter Eve	Same as Year A except for the final lection				Mark 16:1-8
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Isa. 25:6-9	I Pet. 1:3-9	Mark 16:1-8
2nd Sunday	Ps. 148	605	Acts 4:32-37	I John 5:1-6	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 139:1-12	600	Acts 3:13-15, 17-19	I John 2:1-6	Luke 24:35-49
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	560	Acts 4:5-12	I John 3:1-8	John 10:11-18
5th Sunday	Ps. 22:25-31	565	Acts 9:26-31	I John 3:18-24	John 15:1-8
6th Sunday	Ps. 98	576	Acts 11:5*a*, 11-18	I John 4:1-11	John 15:9-17
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Mark 16:15-20
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 1:15-26	I John 4:11-16	John 17:11-19
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:1-21	John 16:5-15

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR B (1993, 1996

1st Sunday	Ps. 149	555	Deut. 4:32-34, 39-40	Rom. 8:12-17	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Ps. 81:1-10	606	Deut. 5:12-15	II Cor. 4:7-11	Mark 2:23–3:6
3rd Sunday	Ps. 61:1-5, 8	570	Gen. 3:9-15	II Cor. 4:13–5:1	Mark 3:20-35
4th Sunday	Ps. 92	611	Ezek. 17:22-24	II Cor. 5:6-10	Mark 4:26-34
5th Sunday	Ps. 107:1-3, 23-32	574	Job 38:1-11, 16-18	II Cor. 5:14-17	Mark 4:35-41
6th Sunday	Ps. 30	557	Lam. 3:22-33[15]	II Cor. 8:1-9, 13-15	Mark 5:21-43
7th Sunday	Ps. 123	602	Ezek. 2:1-5	II Cor. 12:7-10	Mark 6:1-6
8th Sunday	Ps. 85:7-13	575	Amos 7:10-15	Eph. 1:3-14	Mark 6:7-13
9th Sunday	Ps. 23	556	Jer. 23:1-6	Eph. 2:13-22	Mark 6:30-44
10th Sunday	Ps. 145	594	II Kings 4:42-44	Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16	John 6:1-15
11th Sunday	Ps. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Exod. 16:2-15	Eph. 4:17-25	John 6:24-35
12th Sunday	Ps. 34:1-8	566	I Kings 19:4-8	Eph. 4:30–5:2	John 6:41-52
13th Sunday	Ps. 34:9-14	567	Prov. 9:1-6	Eph. 5:15-20	John 6:51-59
14th Sunday	Ps. 34:15-22	578	Josh. 24:1-2a, 14-18	Eph. 5:21-33	John 6:60-69
15th Sunday	Ps. 15	586	Deut. 4:1-8	James 1:17-22, 26-27	Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
16th Sunday	Ps. 146	604	Isa. 35:4-7a	James 2:1-5	Mark 7:31-37
17th Sunday	Ps. 116:1-9	588	Isa. 50:4-10	James 2:14-18	Mark 8:27-38
18th Sunday	Ps. 54	601	Jer. 11:18-20[16]	James 3:13–4:3	Mark 9:30-37
19th Sunday	Ps. 135:1-7, 13-14	603	Num. 11:24-30	James 5:1-6	Mark 9:38-50
20th Sunday	Ps. 128	607	Gen. 2:18-24	Heb. 2:9-13	Mark 10:2-16
21st Sunday	Ps. 90:1-8, 12-17	579	Prov. 3:13-20[17]	Heb. 3:1-6	Mark 10:17-30
22nd Sunday	Ps. 91:9-16	595	Isa. 53:10-12	Heb. 4:12-16	Mark 10:35-45
23rd Sunday	Ps. 126	596	Jer. 31:7-9	Heb. 4:2-10	Mark 10:46-52
24th Sunday	Ps. 119:1-16	593	Deut. 6:1-9	Heb. 7:23-28	Mark 12:28-34
25th Sunday	Ps. 107:1-3, 33-43	589	I Kings 17:8-16	Heb. 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44
26th Sunday	Ps. 16	613	Dan. 12:1-4	Heb. 10:11-18	Mark 13:14-23
27th Sunday	Ps. 111	564	Dan. 7:9-10	Heb. 10:31-39	Mark 13:24-32
Last Sunday	Ps. 93	582	Dan. 7:13-14	Rev. 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37
All Saints'	Ps. 24:1-6	566	Rev. 7:2-4, 9-14	I John 3:1-3	Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR C (1991, 1994

1st Sunday	Ps. 25:1-10	562	Jer. 33:14-16	I Thess. 3:9–4:2	Luke 21:25-36
2nd Sunday	Ps. 126	597	Isa. 9:2, 6-7[18]	Phil. 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
3rd Sunday	Isa. 12:2-6	612	Zeph. 3:14-18a	Phil. 4:4-9	Luke 3:7-18
4th Sunday	Ps. 80:1-7	561	Mic. 5:1-5a	Heb. 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-49

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR C (1991, 1994–1995

Christmas	Ps. 97	585	Isa. 52:6-10	Heb. 1:1-9	John 1:1-18
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Isa. 60:13-21[19]	Gal. 4:4-7	Luke 2:41-52
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Job 28:20-28[20]	I Cor. 1:18-25	Luke 2:36-40

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR C (1992, 1995

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
2nd Sunday	Ps. 36:5-10	568	Isa. 62:1-5	I Cor. 12:3-11	John 2:1-12
3rd Sunday	Ps. 113	563	Neh. 8:1-4a, 5-6, 8-10	I Cor. 12:12-30	Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
4th Sunday	Ps. 71:1-6, 15-17	554	Jer. 1:4-10	I Cor. 12:31–13:13	Luke 4:21-30
5th Sunday	Ps. 138	599	Isa. 6:1-8	I Cor. 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
6th Sunday	Ps. 1	564	Jer. 17:5-10	I Cor. 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
7th Sunday	Ps. 37:3-10	587	Gen. 45:3-8a, 15	I Cor. 15:35-38a, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38
8th Sunday	Ps. 92	573	Isa. 55:5, 10-13[21]	I Cor. 15:50-58	Luke 6:39-45
Last Sunday	Ps. 99:1-5	584	Deut. 34:1-12	II Cor. 3:12–4:2	Luke 9:28-36

LENT: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Ash Wednesday	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Zech. 7:4-10	I Cor. 9:19-27	Luke 5:29-35
1st Sunday	Ps. 91	581	Deut. 26:5-11	Rom. 10:8-13	Luke 4:1-13
2nd Sunday	Ps. 27:7-18	569	Gen. 15:5-12, 17-18	Phil. 3:17–4:1	Luke 13:31-35
3rd Sunday	Ps. 103:1-11	558	Exod. 3:1-8b, 10-15	I Cor. 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
4th Sunday	Ps. 34:1-8	598	Josh. 5:9-12	II Cor. 5:16-21	Luke 15:11-32
5th Sunday	Ps. 28:1-3, 6-9	615	Isa. 43:16-21	Phil. 3:8-14	John 8:1-11
Palm Sunday	Ps. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Deut. 32:36-39	Phil. 2:5-11	Luke 22:14–23:56
Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Num. 9:1-3, 11-12	Heb. 10:16-30	Luke 22:7-20
Good Friday	Ps. 22:1-8, 19-31	559	Hos. 6:1-6	Heb. 9:15-22	Matt. 27:31-50

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Easter Eve	Same as Year A except for the final lection				Luke 24:1-12
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Exod. 15:1-11	I Cor. 15:1-11	Luke 24:1-11
2nd Sunday	Ps. 149	605	Acts 5:12-16	Rev. 1:9-19	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	600	Acts 5:27-42	Rev. 5:11-14	John 21:1-19
4th Sunday	Ps. 100	560	Acts 13:14, 43-52	Rev. 7:9-17	John 10:22-30
5th Sunday	Ps. 145:1-13	565	Acts. 14:19-28	Rev. 21:1-5	John 13:31-35
6th Sunday	Ps. 67	576	Acts 15:1-6, 22-29	Rev. 21:10-14, 22-23	John 14:23-29
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Luke 24:44-53
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 7:55-60	Rev. 22:12-14, 16-17, 20	John 17:20-26
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Gen. 11:1-9	Acts 2:1-21	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-11

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

1st Sunday	Ps. 8	555	Prov. 8:22-31	Rom. 5:1-5	John 3:1-16
2nd Sunday	Ps. 117	606	I Kings 8:38-43	Gal. 1:1-10	Luke 7:1-10
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	570	I Kings 17:17-24	Gal. 1:11-24	Luke 7:11-17
4th Sunday	Ps. 32	611	II Sam. 12:1-10, 13	Gal. 2:11-21	Luke 7:36-8:3
5th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-8	574	Zech. 12:7-10	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 9:18-24
6th Sunday	Ps. 16	557	I Kings 19:14-21	Gal. 4:31-5:1, 13-18	Luke 9:51-62
7th Sunday	Ps. 66:1-12, 16-20	602	Isa. 66:10-14c	Gal. 6:11-18	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
8th Sunday	Ps. 69:30, 32-36	575	Deut. 30:9-14	Col. 1:1-12	Luke 10:25-37
9th Sunday	Ps. 15	556	Gen. 18:1-11	Col. 1:21-28	Luke 10:38-42
10th Sunday	Ps. 138	594	Gen. 18:20-33	Col. 2:6-15	Luke 11:1-13
11th Sunday	Ps. 49:1-12	572	Eccl. 1:2; 2:18-26	Col. 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21
12th Sunday	Ps. 33	566	Gen. 15:1-6[22]	Heb. 11:1-2, 8-19	Luke 12:32-48
13th Sunday	Ps. 82	567	Jer. 38:1b-13	Heb. 12:1-6	Luke 12:49-56
14th Sunday	Ps. 117	578	Isa. 66:18-23	Heb. 12:7-13	Luke 13:22-30
15th Sunday	Ps. 112	586	Prov. 25:6-22[23]	Heb. 12:18-24	Luke 14:1, 7-14
16th Sunday	Ps. 10:12-14, 16-18	604	Prov. 9:8-12[24]	Philem. 1-20	Luke 14:25-33
17th Sunday	Ps. 51:1-17	588	Exod. 32:7-14	I Tim. 1:12-17	Luke 15:1-10
18th Sunday	Ps. 113	601	Amos 8:4-8	I Tim. 2:1-8	Luke 16:1-13
19th Sunday	Ps. 146	603	Amos 6:1-7	I Tim. 6:11-16	Luke 16:19-31
20th Sunday	Ps. 95:1-7	607	Hab. 1:1-3; 2:1-4	II Tim. 1:3-14	Luke 17:1-10
21st Sunday	Ps. 98:1-4	579	II Kings 5:9-17	II Tim. 2:8-13	Luke 17:11-19

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (cont'd.)

22nd Sunday	Ps. 121	595	Exod. 17:8-13	II Tim. 3:14-4:5	Luke 18:1-8
23rd Sunday	Ps. 34:1-2, 15-22	596	Deut. 10:12-22[25]	II Tim. 4:6-8, 16-18	Luke 18:9-14
24th Sunday	Ps. 145	593	Zeph. 1:14-16[26]	II Thess. 1:11-2:2	Luke 19:1-10
25th Sunday	Ps. 148	589	I Chron. 29:10-13[27]	II Thess. 2:15-3:5	Luke 20:27-38
26th Sunday	Ps. 98:1-3	613	Mal. 3:16-4:2a	II Thess. 3:6-13	Luke 21:5-19
27th Sunday	Ps. 98:4-9	564	Mal. 3:1-5; 4:5-6	I Pet. 5:6-11	Luke 17:22-23
Last Sunday	Ps. 46	582	Job 23:1-7	Col. 1:12-20	Luke 23:35-43
All Saints'	Ps. 149	566	Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	Rev. 21:9-11, 22-27	John 11:32-44

SPECIAL DAYS[28]

New Year's Day or Watch Night	580	643	Eccl. 11:6-9; 12:13	Rev. 21:1-6a	Luke 9:57-62
Human Relations Day	573	633	Gen. 1:1-3, 26-31	Acts 10:9-15, 34	Mark 3:31-35
Festival of the Christian Home	588	658	Prov. 31:10-31	Eph. 5:25-6:4	Matt. 19:1-5, 10-14
Heritage Sunday	566	615	Isa. 52:1-2, 7-12	Rom. 5:1-11	Mark 12:28-34a
Independence Day	595	626	Deut. 1:5, 8-18	Gal. 5:13-15	John 8:31-36
Labor Day	555	624	Amos 5:11-15	Col. 3:23-25	John 6:5-14, 26-27
World Order Sunday	596	632	Mic. 4:1-5	James 4:1-12	Matt. 5:43-48
Reformation Day	570	654	Neh. 8:1-3, 5-8	Gal. 3:23-26	John 2:13-16
Drug and Alcohol Concerns Sunday	554	651	Isa. 5:11-12, 20-24	I Cor. 3:16-17	Luke 21:23-26
National Bible Sunday	593	621	Deut. 30:8-20	Rom. 15:4-13	Luke 4:16-21
Thanksgiving Day	575	607	Deut. 8:7-18	II Cor. 9:6-12	Luke 12:16-31

1st Kingdomtide
I Chron. 29:10-18
Rev. 1-4, 6-8
Matt 25:31-40

13th
I Chron 28:1-3
Matt 20:20-28
Eph 6:10-20

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Romans 3. 28

II

THE TRUE FOUNDATION

I WANT to consider this statement with you in the light of the fundamental text which we began to consider last time.

There can be no doubt but that the condition known as spiritual depression is a very common complaint, indeed the more one thinks about it and the more one speaks about it, the more one discovers how common it is. We are considering this condition because, as I have suggested, there are at least two great reasons for our doing so. The first is that it is very sad that anybody should remain in such a condition. But the second reason is still more serious and important, that is that such people are very poor representatives of the Christian faith. As we face the modern world with all its trouble and turmoil and with all its difficulties and sadness, nothing is more important than that we who call ourselves Christian, and who claim the Name of Christ, should be representing our faith in such a way before others, as to give them the impression that here is the solution, and here the answer. In a world where everything has gone so sadly astray, we should be standing out as men and women apart, people characterized by a fundamental joy and certainty in spite of conditions, in spite of adversity. Now that, I think you will agree, is the picture which is given of God's people everywhere in the Scriptures, whether it is the Old Testament or the New. Those men of God stood out in that way, and, whatever their circumstances and conditions, they seemed to possess a secret which enabled them to live triumphantly and to be more than conquerors. It therefore behoves us to examine this state of spiritual depression very closely.

We have already looked at the condition in general and considered some of its main causes. We have already seen that the essence of the treatment according to the Psalmist is that we must really face ourselves. In other words we must talk to ourselves instead of allowing ourselves to talk to us. We must take ourselves in hand, we must address ourselves as the Psalmist addressed himself and his soul, and ask the question: 'Why art thou cast

down? why art thou disquieted within me?'—You have no right to be like this. Why are you depressed and cast down? He faces himself and talks to himself, he argues with himself and brings himself back to the position of faith. He exhorts himself to have faith in God, and then he is in a condition to pray to God.

I want to take up this method which is advocated by the Psalmist. The vital principle is that we must face ourselves and examine ourselves, and if we are among those that never seem to know the joy of salvation and the joy of the Lord, we must discover the cause. The causes are many, and it seems to me that the essence of wisdom in this matter is to deal with these causes one by one and to take them in detail. Nothing must be taken for granted. Indeed it could easily be established that the main cause of trouble in this matter is the fatal tendency to take things for granted. More and more do I find this to be the case as I talk to others about these matters. There are so many people who never seem to arrive at the true Christian position because they are not clear in their minds about certain primary matters, certain fundamental things that should be dealt with at the beginning.

At the risk of being misunderstood at this point, let us put it like this: The particular trouble with which we are dealing tends, I find, to be common among those who have been brought up in a religious manner rather than in those who have not been brought up in a religious manner. It is more likely to affect those who have been brought up in Christian homes and families and who have always been taken to a place of worship than those who have not. There are many such people who seem to go right through their lives in the way described by Shakespeare as 'bound in shallows and in miseries'. They never seem to get out of it. They are in the realm of the Church, and very interested in Christian things; and yet when you compare them with the New Testament description of the new man in Christ you see at once that there is a great difference. Indeed they themselves see that, and this is often the main cause of their depression and their unhappiness. They see other Christians rejoicing and they say: 'Well, I cannot say that I am like that. That person has got something that I have not got', and they would give the whole world if they could but get something which the other person has. They take up Christian biographies and read the lives of various saints who have adorned the life of the Christian Church, and they admit at once that they are not like them. They know that

they have never been like them, and that there is something which those people obviously enjoyed which they themselves have never had.

There are large numbers of people in this unhappy situation. The Christian life seems to them to be a constant problem, and they are always asking the same question. 'Why cannot I get there? Why cannot I be like that?' They read books which are meant to give instruction about the Christian way of life, they attend meetings and conferences, always seeking this something which they do not find. And they are cast down, their souls are cast down and disquieted within them.

Now it is all-important, as we face such people, to be quite certain that they are clear in their minds about the primary and most fundamental principles of the Christian faith. Many and many a time I have found in talking to them that their real trouble lies just here. I would not say that they are not Christians but I am suggesting that they are what I would call miserable Christians, simply because they have not understood the way of salvation, and for that reason all their beliefs and efforts have been more or less useless. They often concentrate on the question of sanctification, but it does not help them because they have not understood justification. Having assumed that they were on the right road, they assume that all they have to do is to continue along it.

It is an interesting theological point as to whether such people are Christians or not. For myself I would say they are. The classic example is of course John Wesley. I would hesitate to say that John Wesley was not a Christian until 1738; but I am certain of this, that John Wesley had not understood the way of salvation as justification by faith only, until 1738. He had in a sense subscribed to the full teaching of the Bible, but he had not understood it, nor fully apprehended it. I have no doubt that if you had questioned him he would have given the correct answers even about the death of our Lord; and yet in experience he was not clear about justification by faith. You will recall that it was only as the result of his meeting with the Moravian brethren, and in particular the conversation he had with one called Peter Böhler, on a journey from London to Oxford, that he was truly made to understand this vital doctrine. There was a man who had been trying to find happiness in his Christian life by doing things, preaching to the prisoners in Oxford, giving up his fellowship of

his college, and facing the hazards of crossing the Atlantic in order to preach to pagans in Georgia. He was trying to find happiness by living life in a given way. In fact the whole trouble with John Wesley really was that he had never understood or grasped the doctrine of justification by faith. He had not understood this verse that we are considering: 'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law'. It seems almost impossible that such a man, who had been brought up in an unusually godly home and who had spent all his life and all his time in Christian work, should be wrong about a first and so fundamental a point and should have been wrong at the very beginning. But so it was.

I am suggesting that this is the case with large numbers of people still. They have assumed that they are right about the first things, but they never have been right about their justification, and it is just here that the devil causes confusion. It suits him well that such people should be concerned about sanctification and holiness and various other things, but they can never be right until they are right here, and that is why we must start with this. It is no use going on to deal with the superstructure if the foundation is not right. We therefore start with this great doctrine. This confusion is an old trouble. In a sense it is the masterpiece of Satan. He will even encourage us to be righteous as long as he has us confused at this point. That he is doing so at the present time is clear from the fact that the average person in the Church seems to regard men as Christian simply because they do good works, even though they may be entirely wrong about this preliminary truth. It is an old trouble, and it was the essential trouble with the Jews. It is what our Lord was continually saying to the Pharisees, and it certainly was the major argument which the Apostle Paul had with the Jews. They were entirely wrong with regard to the whole question of the Law, and the main problem was to show them the right view of it. The Jews believed that the Law was made by God in order that man might save himself by keeping it. They said that all one had to do was to keep the Law, and that if you kept the Law you would justify yourself, and that if you led your life according to the Law, God would accept you and you would be well pleasing in His sight. And they believed that they could do that, because they had never understood the Law. They put their own interpretation on it and made of it something that was well within their reach.

And so they thought that all was well. That is the picture of the Pharisees given in the Gospels and everywhere in the New Testament. It was the whole essential trouble with the Jews, and it is still the essence of the problem with many people. We have to realize that there are certain things about which we must be perfectly clear before we can really hope to have peace, and to enjoy the Christian life.

This preliminary point is one which we can well put by a general exposition of the teaching of this third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. The first four chapters of this great and mighty Epistle are really devoted to this one theme. The one thing Paul was anxious to make clear was this message about the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ. He had already said in chapter i. 16, 17: 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written the just shall live by faith'. Yes, but the question was, why did not everybody believe that? Why was this not accepted almost automatically by all who heard it, as the greatest good news that had ever come into the world? The answer is that they did not believe it because they did not see the need of it. They had the wrong view of righteousness. The righteousness of which Paul speaks means rightness with God. There is no happiness finally, there is no peace, there is no joy except we be right with God. Now that is agreed by all, that is assented to by the miserable Christian as well as the assured Christian. Yes, but the whole difference between the one and the other is that the former, the miserable Christian, is wrong in his ideas as to how this rightness with God is to be obtained. That was the trouble with the Jews also. They held, as I have reminded you, that this rightness is attained by conforming to the Law as they understood it, and keeping it. But their whole view of the Law was entirely wrong. They perverted it, with the result that the very thing which God had given them to further His way of salvation had become in their hands the main obstacle to it.

What then is the teaching? There are certain simple principles about which we must be quite clear before we can ever hope to enjoy this Christian salvation. The first is conviction of sin. We must be absolutely clear about our sinfulness. Here I follow the method of the Apostle Paul and raise an imaginary objection.

I imagine someone saying at once: 'Are you going to preach to us about sin, are you going to preach about conviction of sin? You say your object is to make us happy but if you are going to preach to us about conviction of sin, surely that is going to make us still more unhappy. Are you deliberately trying to make us miserable and wretched?' To which the simple reply is, Yes! That is the teaching of the great Apostle in these chapters. It may sound paradoxical—the term does not matter—but beyond any question that is the rule, and there are no exceptions. You must be made miserable before you can know true Christian joy. Indeed the real trouble with the miserable Christian is that he has never been truly made miserable because of conviction of sin. He has by-passed the essential preliminary to joy, he has been assuming something that he has no right to assume.

Let me put it again in a Scriptural statement. You remember the aged Simeon standing with the infant Lord Jesus Christ in his arms? He said a very profound thing when he said: 'This Child is set for the fall and for the rising again of many in Israel'. There is no rising again until there has been a preliminary fall. This is an absolute rule, and yet this is the thing that is being so sadly forgotten by so many today, and assumed by as many more. But the Scripture has its order, and its order must be observed if we are to derive the benefits of the Christian salvation. Ultimately, the only thing which is going to drive a man to Christ and make him rely upon Christ alone, is a true conviction of sin. We go astray because we are not truly convicted of our sin. That is why I say that this is in particular the problem of all those who have been brought up in a religious or Christian manner. Their chief trouble often is their wrong idea of sin. I remember such a person putting this very dramatically to me on one occasion. She was a woman who had been brought up in a very religious home, who had always attended a place of worship and been busily and actively engaged in the life of the Church. She was then a member in a church where a number of people had been converted suddenly from the world and from various kinds of evil living—drunkenness and such like things. I well remember her saying to me: 'You know, I almost wish that I had not been brought up in the way I have been brought up. I could wish that I had been living their kind of life in order that I might have their marvellous experience'. What did she mean? What she was really saying was that she had never seen herself as a sinner.

Why not? There are many reasons. That kind of person thinks of sin only in terms of action, in terms of sins. Not only that, but in terms of certain particular actions only. So their tendency is to think that because they have not been guilty of these particular things, that they are not really sinners at all. Indeed, sometimes they put it quite plainly and say: 'I have never really thought of myself as a sinner: but of course that is not surprising as my life has been sheltered from the beginning. I have never been tempted to do these things, and it is not surprising therefore that I have never felt myself to be a sinner'. Now there we see the very essence of this fallacy. Their thinking is in terms of actions, particular actions, and of comparisons with other people and their experiences, and so on. For this reason they have never had a real conviction of sin, and because of that they have never plainly seen their utter absolute need of the Lord Jesus Christ. They have heard it preached that Christ has died for our sins and they say that they believe that; but they have never really known its absolute necessity for themselves.

How then can such people be convicted of sin? That is Paul's subject in this third chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. He has really been dealing with it throughout the second chapter also. This is his way of doing it, this is his great thesis: 'There is none righteous, no not one, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God'. Who are these 'all'? He keeps on telling us, Jews as well as Gentiles. The Jews would of course agree that the Gentiles were certainly sinners, outside the pale, sinners against God. 'But wait a minute,' says Paul in effect, 'you are equally sinners'. The reason why the Jews hated Christ and crucified Him, the whole explanation of 'the offence of the Cross', the reason why Paul was treated as he was by his fellow countrymen who hated the Christian faith, was that the Christian faith said that the Jew was as much a sinner as the Gentile. It asserts that the Jew—the person who thought he had always lived a righteous and religious life—is as much a sinner as the most flagrant sinner amongst the Gentiles. 'All have sinned', Jews and Gentiles are equally condemned before God.

The same is true today, and if we are concerned about a conviction of sin, the first thing we have to do is stop thinking about particular sins. How difficult we all find this. We have all got these prejudices. We confine sin to certain things only, and because we are not guilty of these we think that we are not

sinners. But that is not the way to know conviction of sin. It was not in that way that John Wesley came to see himself as a sinner. You remember what brought him to a conviction of sin? It began when he saw the way in which some Moravian Brethren behaved during a storm in mid-Atlantic. John Wesley was terrified by the storm and afraid to die; the Moravians were not. They seemed to be as happy in the hurricane and in the midst of the storm as they were when the sun was shining. John Wesley realized that he was afraid of death, he somehow did not seem to know God as these people knew Him. In other words he began to feel his need, and that is always the beginning of a conviction of sin.

The essential point is, that the way to know yourself a sinner is not to compare yourself with other people; it is to come face to face with the Law of God. Well, what is God's Law? Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal? 'I have never done that, therefore I am not a sinner.' But, my friend, that is not the Law of God in its entirety. Would you like to know what the Law of God is? Here it is—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Mark 12. 30, 31). Forget all about drunkards and their like, forget all the people you read about in the press at the present time. Here is the test for you and me: Are you loving God with all your being? If you are not, you are a sinner. That is the test. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' God has made us and He has made us for Himself. He made man for His own glory and He intended man to live entirely for Him. Man was to be His representative, and was to dwell in communion with Him. He was to be the lord of the universe, he was to glorify God. As it is put in the Shorter Catechism: 'The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever', and if you are not doing so you are a sinner of the deepest dye, whether you know it and feel it or not.

Or let me put it like this. I find this is a very valuable way of approaching the subject. God knows I am preaching my own experience to you for I was brought up in a religious manner myself. I am also preaching my experience as one who has frequently to help people who have been brought up in the same way. Man is meant to know God. So the question is: Do you know God? I am not asking if you believe in God, or if you

believe certain things about Him. To be a Christian is to have eternal life, and as our Lord says in John 17. 3: 'This is life eternal to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent'. So the test we apply to ourselves is that. Not, 'Have I done this or that?' My test is a positive one: 'Do I know God? Is Jesus Christ real to me?' I am not asking whether you know things about Him but do you know God, are you enjoying God, is God the centre of your life, the soul of your being, the source of your greatest joy? He is meant to be. He made man in such a way that that was to be the position, that man might dwell in communion with God and enjoy God and walk with God. You and I are meant to be like that, and if we are not like that, it is sin. That is the essence of sin. We have no right not to be like that. That is sin of the deepest and worst type. The essence of sin, in other words, is that we do not live entirely to the glory of God. Of course by committing particular sins we aggravate our guilt before God, but you can be innocent of all gross sins and yet be guilty of this terrible thing, of being satisfied with your life, of having pride in your achievements and of looking down on others and feeling that you are better than others. There is nothing worse than that because you are saying to yourself that you are somehow nearer to God than they are, and yet the whole time you are not. If that is your attitude you are like the Pharisee in the temple who thanked God that he was not like the other man—'this publican'. The Pharisee had never seen the need of forgiveness and there is no more terrible sin than that. I know of nothing worse than the person who says: 'You know I have never really felt that I am a sinner'. That is the height of sin because it means that you have never realized the truth about God and the truth about yourself. Read the argument of the Apostle Paul and you will find that his logic is not only inevitable, but also unanswerable. 'There is none righteous, no not one.' 'We know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.' If you have never realized your guilt or guiltiness before God you will never have joy in Christ. It is impossible. 'Not the righteous, sinners Jesus came to save.' 'They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.'

There is the first thing—conviction of sin. If you have not a conviction of sin, and if you do not realize that you are un-

worthy before God, and that you are utterly condemned and a complete failure before God, pay attention to nothing else until you have it, until you come to this realization, because you will never find joy, you will never get rid of your depression until you are right about that. Conviction of sin is an essential preliminary to a true experience of salvation.

This brings me to the second principle. The second thing the true Christian realizes is God's way of salvation in Christ. This is the great good news. 'This is the thing I am preaching', says Paul, in effect, to the Romans, 'this righteousness that is of God, that is in Jesus Christ, His righteousness.' What is he talking about? It can be put in the form of a question if you like. What is your view of Christ? Why did He come into the world? What has God done in Christ? Is He merely a teacher, an example, and so on? I shall not waste your time by showing the utter futility of all that. No, this is something positive, this righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. Salvation is all in Christ, and unless you feel yourself shut up to Christ with everything else having failed, you are not a Christian, and it is not surprising that you are not happy. 'The righteousness of God in Jesus Christ' means that God sent Him into the world in order that He might honour the Law and so men might be forgiven. Here is One who gave perfect obedience to God. Here is One, God in the flesh, who has taken human nature unto Himself and, as man, has rendered perfect homage to God, perfect allegiance, perfect obedience. God's law He kept fully and absolutely without a failure. But not only that. Paul adds other things in this classic statement of the doctrine of the Atonement; 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus'. Which means this. Before man can be reconciled to God, before man can know God, this sin of his must be removed. God has said that He will punish sin, and that the punishment of sin is death and banishment from the face of God. This has to be dealt with. And what has happened? Well, says Paul, God has set Him forth as a propitiation. That is the means which God has employed. His being the propitiation for our sins means that God has made Him responsible for our sins. They have been placed upon Him and God has dealt with them and punished them there, and

therefore because He has punished our sins in Christ, in His body upon the Cross, He can justly forgive us. You see this is high doctrine. It is a daring thing for the Apostle to say, but it has to be said and I repeat it. God, because He is righteous and holy and eternal, could not forgive the sin of man without punishing it. He said He would punish it, so He must punish it, and, blessed be His Name, He has punished it. He is just, therefore, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. The sin has been punished, so God, Who is just and righteous, can forgive sin.

How then does it work? It works like this. God accepts this righteousness of Christ, this perfect righteousness face to face with the Law which He honoured in every respect. He has kept it and given obedience to it, He has borne its penalty. The Law is fully satisfied. God's way of salvation, says Paul, is that. He gives to us the righteousness of Christ. If we have seen our need and go to God and confess it, God will give us His own Son's righteousness. He imputes Christ's righteousness to us who believe in Him, and regards us as righteous, and declares and pronounces us to be righteous in Him. That is the way of salvation, the Christian way of salvation, the way of salvation through justification by faith. So that it comes to this. That I see and I believe and I look to nothing and to no one except to the Lord Jesus Christ. I like Paul's way of putting it. He asks: 'Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith'. You foolish Jews, says Paul, you are boasting about the fact that you have been circumcised, that you have the oracles of God and that you are God's people. You must cease to do that. You must not rest upon the fact that you have this tradition and that you are children of your forefathers. There is no boasting, you have to rest exclusively upon the Lord Jesus Christ and His perfect work. The Jew is not superior to the Gentile in this respect. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' We look to Christ and to Christ alone, and not to ourselves in any respect whatsoever.

To make it quite practical let me say that there is a very simple way of testing yourself to know whether you believe that. We betray ourselves by what we say. The Lord Himself said we should be justified by our words, and how true it is. I have often had to deal with this point with people, and I have explained the way of justification by faith and told them how it is all in Christ, and that God puts His righteousness upon us. I have

explained it all to them, and then I have said: 'Well, now are you quite happy about it, do you believe that?' And they say, 'Yes'. Then I say: 'Well, then, you are now ready to say that you are a Christian'. And they hesitate. And I know they have not understood. Then I say: 'What is the matter, why are you hesitating?' And they say: 'I do not feel that I am good enough'. At once I know that in a sense I have been wasting my breath. They are still thinking in terms of themselves; their idea still is that they have to make themselves good enough to be a Christian, good enough to be accepted with Christ. They have to do it! 'I am not good enough.' It sounds very modest, but it is the lie of the devil, it is a denial of the faith. You think that you are being humble. But you will never be good enough; nobody has ever been good enough. The essence of the Christian salvation is to say that He is good enough and that I am in Him!

As long as you go on thinking about yourself and saying: 'Ah, yes, I would like to, but I am not good enough; I am a sinner, a great sinner,' you are denying God and you will never be happy. You will continue to be cast down and disquieted in your soul. You will think you are better at times and then again you will find that you are not as good as you thought you were. You read the lives of the saints and you realize that you are nowhere. So you keep on asking: 'What can I do? I still feel that I am not good enough'. Forget yourself, forget all about yourself. Of course you are not good enough, you never will be good enough. The Christian way of salvation tells you this, that it does not matter what you have been, it does not matter what you have done. How can I put this plainly? I try to say it from the pulpit every Sunday because I think it is the thing that is robbing most people of the joy of the Lord. It does not matter if you have almost entered into the depths of hell, if you are guilty of murder as well as every other vile sin, it does not matter from the standpoint of being justified with God. You are no more hopeless than the most respectable self-righteous person in the world. Do you believe that?

There is another good way of testing yourself. Do you believe that from the standpoint of salvation and justification with God that all our customary distinctions are abolished at a stroke and that what determines whether we are sinners or not is not what we have done, but our relationship to God? I say, therefore, that this is the test, that you acknowledge readily and say clearly

that you look to Christ and to Christ alone and to nothing and no one else, that you stop looking at particular sins and particular people. Look at nothing and nobody but look entirely to Christ and say:

> 'My hope is built on nothing less
> Than Jesu's blood and righteousness,
> I dare not trust my sweetest frame,
> But wholly lean on Jesu's Name.
> On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
> All other ground is sinking sand.'

You must so believe that as to be able to go further and say with holy boldness:

> The terrors of law and of God
> With me can have nothing to do,
> My Saviour's obedience and blood
> Hide all my transgressions from view.'

Would you like to be rid of this spiritual depression? The first thing you have to do is to say farewell now once and for ever to your past. Realize that it has been covered and blotted out in Christ. Never look back at your sins again. Say: 'It is finished, it is covered by the Blood of Christ'. That is your first step. Take that and finish with yourself and all this talk about goodness, and look to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only then that true happiness and joy are possible for you. What you need is not to make resolutions to live a better life, to start fasting and sweating and praying. No! you just begin to say:

> 'I rest my faith on Him alone
> Who died for my transgressions to atone.'

Take that first step and you will find that immediately you will begin to experience a joy and a release that you have never known in your life before. 'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.' Blessed be the Name of God for such a wondrous salvation for desperate sinners.

To test your ability to distinguish interpersonal styles, please label person A's behavior in the following scenes as aggressive, passive or assertive:

Scene 1

A: *Is that a new dent I see in the car?*

B: *Look, I just got home, it was a wretched day and I don't want to talk about it now.*

A: *This is important to me, and we're going to talk about it now!*

B: *Have a heart.*

A: *Let's decide now who is going to pay to have it fixed, when and where.*

B: *I'll take care of it. Now leave me alone, for heaven's sake!*

A's behavior is ☒ Aggressive ☐ Passive ☐ Assertive

Scene 2

A: *You left me so by myself at that party . . . I really felt abandoned.*

B: *You were being a party pooper.*

A: *I didn't know anybody—the least you could have done is introduce me to some of your friends.*

B: *Listen, you're grown up. You can take care of yourself. I'm tired of your nagging to be taken care of all the time.*

A: *And I'm tired of your inconsiderateness.*

B: *Okay, I'll stick to you like glue next time.*

A's behavior is ☐ Aggressive ☐ Passive ☒ Assertive

Scene 3

A: *Would you mind helping me for a minute with this file?*

B: *I'm busy with this report. Catch me later.*

A: *Well, I really hate to bother you, but it's important.*

B: *Look, I have a four o'clock deadline.*

A: *Okay, I understand. I know it's hard to be interrupted.*

A's behavior is ☐ Aggressive ☒ Passive ☐ Assertive

Scene 4

A: *I got a letter from Mom this morning. She wants to come and spend two weeks with us. I'd really like to see her.*

B: *Oh no, not your mother! And right on the heels of your sister. When do we get a little time to ourselves?*

A: *Well, I do want her to come, but I know you need to spend some time without inlaws under foot. I'd like to invite her to come in a month, and instead of two weeks, I think one week would be enough. What do you say to that?*

B: *That's a big relief to me.*

A's behavior is ☐ Aggressive ☐ Passive ☒ Assertive

Scene 5

A: *Boy, you're looking great today!*

B: *Who do you think you're kidding? My hair is a fright and my clothes aren't fit for the Goodwill box.*

A: *Have it your way.*

B: *And I feel just as bad as I look today.*

A: *Right. I've got to run now.*

A's behavior is ☐ Aggressive ☒ Passive ☐ Assertive

Scene 6

(While at a party, A is telling her friends how much she appreciates her boyfriend taking her out to good restaurants and to the theatre. Her friends criticize her for being unliberated)

A: *Not so. I don't make nearly as much as a secretary as he does as a lawyer. I couldn't afford to take us both out or pay my own way to all the nice places we go. Some traditions make sense, given the economic realities.*

A's behavior is ☐ Aggressive ☐ Passive ☒ Assertive

Conversational Prayer

We Begin With His Presence

1. **Jesus Is Here .... Matt. 18:19, 20**
   Visualize Him. Use creative imagination and the Meditation card. Be silent. Be a little child at His feet. He loves you.

2. **Thank You, Lord .... Phil. 4:4-7**
   Gratitude is worship which opens the heart.
   Be audible, brief, specific.
   Use open-end prayer, don't close it.

We Pray for Persons Present and Absent

Thus Receiving and Giving Love

3. **Forgive me, Lord .... James 5:13-16**
   Confession is a part of worship. Be honest.
   Pray for yourself, then others will pray for you.
   This is prayer response.
   Say "I" when you mean yourself.
   Say "we" when all present can be included.

4. **Help my brother .... Mark 11:22-25**
   Prayer-response should be audible, brief with love and thanksgiving. Use first names.
   The Holy Spirit will give you words when you pray.
   Give thanks when someone prays for you.
   This is agreeing in prayer.

This Is Love In Action

Love one another as I have loved you. ...... John 15:12
Ask whatever you will and it shall be done. John 15:7

This prayer from the heart is love in action. We become involved in God's purposes, in His view-point, and with each other's needs. Then the circle will widen to include family, friends, church, nation, the world.

PRAYER-CONVERSING WITH GOD
by Rosalind Rinker
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Meditation

1. **My child, I love you.**
   I love you unconditionally.
   I love you, good or bad, with no strings attached.
   I love you like this because I know all about you.
   I have known you ever since you were a child.
   I know what I can do for you.
   I know what I want to do for you.

2. **My child, I accept you.**
   I accept you just as you are.
   You don't need to change yourself.
   I'll do the changing when you are ready.
   I love you just as you are.
   Believe this—for I assure you it is true.

3. **My child, I care about you.**
   I care about every big or little thing which happens to you. Believe this.
   I care enough to do something about it.
   Remember this.
   I will help you when you need me. Ask me.
   I love you.
   I accept you.
   I care about you.

4. **My child, I forgive you.**
   I forgive you, and my forgiveness is complete.
   Not like humans who forgive but cannot forget.
   I love you. My arms are open with love.
   Please come here! Come here to Me!
   I forgive you.
   Do not carry your guilt another moment.
   I carried it all for you on the cross.
   Believe this. It is true.

Rejoice . . . And Be Glad

COMMUNICATING LOVE BY PRAYER
by Rosalind Rinker
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it or not. He is there. He remains constant no matter how you fluctuate.

Read chapter 7 again, and come to Him as a little child. Speak directly to Jesus Christ—call Him by Name. Cast yourself before him—and then having done all this, go on with the business of living. He'll come through just at the right time. Something will catch your attention and give you "the message" just when you are ready—a book, a person, an event, a word, a song. Ideas will crystalize.

You have a lifetime to discover the answers to your questions. Growth and maturity come through asking questions. Creativity comes through alertness. Honesty is a vital part of growth, of having faith.

Sometimes it's more fun to find out what home is like from the inside than from the outside.

Home is a place where love is more important than unanswered questions.

Home is a place where one can learn through failure because there is love with caring, acceptance and communication.

Home is where there is a person who loves you.

Home is being with the Lord Jesus.

Some more questions

1. Read the true or false statements which follow. Mark them.
2. What kind of a doubter are you?
   a. Are you an honest doubter? Some people prefer to doubt, so they will never have to accept an answer, or make a decision.
   b. Do your doubts stretch your mind and take you beyond yourself? Or do they merely make you confused and critical?

True or false?

Read, mark, and give your reasons for or against in each case.

......Faith and doubt can exist together.

......One is stronger in his beliefs after he has questioned them.

......If I have any doubts, I can't be a believer.

......A man can become a Christian even if he does believe in evolution.

......A man can be a Christian and believe in evolution.

......I can be a child of God and still have questions about the validity of the Christian faith.

......There has to be *more* than we know about God.

......God has to be greater than ideas any mind or any book can contain.

......Facing one's doubts honestly is the beginning of maturity.

......One does not know what he really believes until he has had a few doubts and questions.

When people pray aloud together, love is given and received, and there is the power of Divine love to heal. For Jesus Christ is love and He is healing. All healing love centers in and radiates from Him, and is directed to us whom He loves.

This is what Christ does. He draws the confused currents of human love into the unifying stream of Divine love.

Where Christ is present, in, among, and with His children there is healing love and healing power present.

Jesus: If you knew what God can give, and if you knew who it is that said to you, "Give me a drink," you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water!

The woman: Sir, give me this water, so that I may stop being thirsty. . . .

Jesus: Drink this water I give, and you will never again be thirsty, for my gift will become a spring within your very self, continually refreshing and constantly fulfilling you—now and through eternity.

(John 4:10, 14, 15; based on Phillips)

11

Discovering joy in prayer

Isn't it wonderful to know how to pray, Ros? *Daily Light* for this evening has verses about asking in His name and *getting!* I've discovered that praying isn't a separate part of your spiritual life—it's your very life. It is God's presence. This is what "Christians" are always seeking to grasp, isn't it?

Prayer is problem solving. Prayer is getting back on good terms with Him—when we've let things get out of kilter. . . . And prayer is just daily *everything,* off and on, throughout the whole day. If you haven't learned how to pray, you're stuck! Thank you for showing me how to pray!

This brand new believer is not making a cut-and-dried method out of the four steps of prayer I taught her. She is making them serve to bring God into her everyday life and activities. Her joyous discovery is contagious.

Anna B. Mow, author of *Your Child* (and other books, Zondervan) constantly meets in her travels people who, having read my first book on prayer, started conversational prayer groups in their church,

but have found them sometimes ineffectual. After a few questions, she discovers they are trying to follow a method instead of talking to Jesus as a person—in a spirit of love and freedom.

How do you get into the spirit of love and freedom when you pray?

How can I give you a formula for love? Or for freedom? Or even for prayer? I can only share with you what works for me, what has renewed me and restored to me the joy of living. Read again the two paragraphs at the beginning of this chapter. There is enthusiasm! There is discovery! There is freshness and newness. There is the presence of God and acceptance.

Why not begin anew as a little child, speaking from your heart to Jesus Christ who is present? After you've become at ease with Him, you will know when to address "Our Father," but do start with being as a child at the feet of Jesus.

We have already discovered that a child is both teachable and unself-conscious. Self-consciousness is an adult hurdle which presents a definite barrier. If one is aware of inadequacy in prayer-language, or of inexperience in audible prayer, or of inability to express himself in prayer, these become barriers of self-consciousness. Barriers when recognized can be broken down so that a new highway of expression can be prepared.

Four basic steps

The purpose of these four steps to prayer is to give beginners in prayer a place to start—a workable plan. They will serve as a pattern-breaker to replace previous attempts which ended either in failure or cold conformity. You will find the painful self-consciousness slipping away unnoticed as you begin to

concentrate on the meaning of these four steps. To follow them requires your attention, and this in turn produces fresh interest.

1. Jesus is here. Matthew 18:19-20
2. Thank You, Lord. Philippians 4:4-7
3. Help me, Lord. James 5:13-16
4. Help my brother. Mark 11:22-25

Read them again. There are only three words in each step. Look away from the page now, and repeat them. You will never forget them, and you will find yourself following them at the most unlikely moment —which is the way prayer ought to be offered.

All you may have learned in your own private school of prayer can be fitted into these steps, and once you've used them, you'll find the order is not important. I am not trying to teach you a method. I am attempting to teach you to speak with a Person who loves you. These guide lines are intended to quickly and easily make the "how-to" part both familiar and workable.

You will find these four steps prepared in a brief outline below:

Step by step

1. *Jesus is here*

There is no problem praying when God is near. To feel His nearness, you act on the knowledge of the

truth of His presence. You will increasingly learn how to make use of your creative imagination. The Spirit of Christ will be there with you, whether or not you feel Him.

(For the leader: This is a time for silent worship, with participants centering on the thoughts you give them. Read Matthew 18:19, 20. A suggested opening is: "Hear the words of Jesus . . . (read the verses). Let us forget one another and remember we want to be as little children at the feet of Jesus." You may use other ideas or Scripture, but keep the meditation very short, very specific, suggesting *Christ with us*, here and now.)

2. *Thank You, Lord.*

The first step is the beginning of silent worship together. The second step is a continuation of worship in which all participate. Giving thanks is a form of worship which opens not only mouths, but hearts. Let your sentence prayers be brief. If you have two "thank you's" then pray twice, letting others pray too.

(For leaders: These first steps are a unit of worship in receiving love. The next two are a unit in giving love. You may have to remind them several times to give thanks for only *one* thing at a time. This, in the beginning, encourages many to take part who otherwise might remain silent.)

3. *Help me, Lord.*

At this time (God will guide you) you must decide whether or not you wish to admit a specific fault or need. If you do, those present will pray for you.

(For leaders: You will need wisdom and discernment when you introduce this third step. Much will depend upon those present. Sometimes the group needs to be broken into twos or threes for periods of

five or ten minutes. If this third step is consistently omitted, a lack of personal honesty and healing love is fostered, and the result is a rather "cold" prayer time.

4. *Help my brother.*

As soon as a person prays for himself, another one or two should be applying a "band-aid" of love upon that wounded spirit. Any revealing of the heart calls for immediate response on the part of those who heard the prayer. Let your prayer-response be brief, to the point, with thanksgiving and with love. And without preaching or suggesting! Prayer should involve neither of these. We pray for each other by name, back and forth sometimes, according to the discernment received through listening and through loving. It is important that the group be small so first names—yes, first names—of those present are used. Prayer then becomes a more meaningful act of personal love and concern.

Joy is a gift

Joy in prayer is a gift which comes as a result of loving and being loved. Jesus said in John 15:9, 11, 12 (Amplified N.T.):

> I have loved you [just] as the Father has loved Me; abide in My love—continue in His love with Me. . . . I have told you these things that My joy and delight may be in you, and that your joy *and* gladness may be full measure *and* complete *and* overflowing. This is My commandment, that you love one another [just] as I have loved you.

As you continue to read chapters 12, 13 and 14, you will find further instructions on these four basic steps. We are simply outlining a fresh approach on loving one another as Christ has loved us, by praying

together. We can consciously receive His love when we are consciously in His presence; then we have an abundant supply to give away. To learn to give love and care through praying together results in sudden joy springing up in all our hearts.

Our need to pray together

"I have just attended an abysmal prayer meeting," wrote a friend of mine. "Why people even bother to keep coming is beyond me. The spirit was lacking, requests were general, and thanksgiving almost non-existent. The prayers were lengthy and oratorical. How can we be so insensitive to human need all around and within us by calling this a prayer meeting!"

After reading my first book on prayer, a concerned pastor wrote:

> My people need to learn to pray with one another. They need to discard old patterns of rigidity and traditionalism. They need to love one another in prayer. They need to be re-born, an experience which comes through prayer.

Do people who are unable to pray become reborn when they pray? Yes, they do. I found when I explain these four steps and announce a demonstration of them, people are eager to learn. I invite those desiring to participate to meet me after the lecture in a certain place. For five or ten minutes we stand together in a circle as I lead them into an actual experience of conversational prayer by following the four basic steps.

After one such demonstration, I received the following letter:

> My husband had been having trouble with his nerves due to the tension of starting a new business with his brother-in-law. For about 10 days before you came, he had been acutely miserable every morning. That Tuesday night after you spoke, my husband, daughter, and I stood in the circle. For the first time in his life, my husband felt the Holy Spirit invade his soul and he spoke aloud saying only, "Thank you, Jesus, for the relief I feel." Following this came my husband's complete conversion. The next morning the three of us had our first prayer time together . . . aloud.

Do you wish to discover joy in prayer?

Open your heart willingly for Jesus to love you.

Follow the suggestions in this chapter.

And start praying now with one other person. If you don't know who that will be, ask God—He'll show you.

True prayer is loving sensitivity.

CONVERSATIONAL PRAYER

We Start with His Presence

(we receive His love)

1. *Jesus is Here* . . . . . Matthew 18:19, 20
   Use creative imagination and silence.
   Visualize Christ. Welcome Him.
2. *Thank You, Lord* . . . Philippians 4:4-7
   Gratitude is a heart-opener.
   Audible. Brief. To the point.
   Open-end prayer—don't close it.

3. *Help me, Lord* . . . . . . James 5:13-16

Forgive me, Lord . . . be specific.
Pray for yourself . . . be honest.
Then others can pray for you.
Say "I" when you mean yourself.
Say "we" when all present can be included.

4. *Help my brother* . . . . Mark 11:22-25

Lord, answer his prayer! This is prayer-response.
Pray for each other by name.
The Holy Spirit will put into your heart what you should pray for.
Pray briefly, informally, with love.
Give thanks when someone prays for you.

This Is Love in Action

Love one another as I have loved you. John 15:12

Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done. John 15:7

This kind of prayer-from-the-heart is love in action. We become involved in God's purposes, in His viewpoint, and with each other's needs for love's sake. Then the circle may widen to include family, friends, church, our nation, and the world.

by Rosalind Rinker
Author of *Prayer—Conversing With God*
(Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich.)

Part IV. Four Basic Steps in Prayer

~ 2 ~

How can I know God loves me?

In this chapter, seven people tell how they learned to know God loves them, personally.

One of my great discoveries in the life of prayer—which is communicating with God—is the simple fact that God loves people. Good or bad, strong or weak, young or old, rich or poor, black or white, He loves them all. I had to discover that His love included me regardless of whether I considered myself good or bad.

"I don't believe God loves me," declared a young woman from the back seat of a car in which we were riding. I turned and looked at her, for it was the first time I'd ever heard anyone make such a statement. She had, I learned, experienced an unhappy and bitter childhood. The early treatment to which she had been subjected had so inhibited her, she was unable either to accept love or to express love.

Since then I've met others like her. Their reactions

always seem to involve a parent unable to give love to the child. Rejection and an accompanying lack of love-security is expressed in a person's face. It shows in the set of the mouth, and is often revealed by bitten finger-nails and nervous gestures.

Do you know and believe God's love for you?

Do you ever say to yourself when you arise in the morning, "A new day! God loves me! Thank You, Father!" When you walk do you lift up your head, and let the smile on your face show God and others you're glad? When you truly learn the magnitude of God's personal love and concern for you, then your entire being can and should reflect the joy of being alive, the happiness of being loved.

Since my discovery that God really loves each of us regardless of what we may think of ourselves, I've tried to help others make this same discovery.

Because of what they've done, think they are, or have become, many people can't believe God loves them. Often these people cannot love themselves, let alone others. They consider themselves hypocrites because of the false front they feel forced to display before the world.

Nevertheless it is true. God loves them. And Jesus loves them.

~

"Thank you for showing me Jesus loves me," wrote a friend. "Not only me, but everyone. I guess I never realized He loves people just the way they are. Now I'm looking at everyone I meet through different eyes. Now it seems so right to say in my heart (as I look at others), 'God loves you, and so do I.' "

Another wrote: "That morning you spoke, you repeated over and over, *God loves you, just as you are.* I saw Christ in you, loving me. It was so new to

me, I couldn't forget it. A few months later my heart was completely open, and I met Christ as my personal Saviour."

Still another: "I guess it's because I've never been able to accept myself, nor feel others would accept me, that I believed I was not good enough to be accepted by Christ. I have asked Him to come into my life, but I never felt loved. How could He love me, when I don't love myself? You were so convincing, when you said Jesus loved *me*. It was when we were sitting in that car, and you mentioned how Christ loved the different people who passed by, and how everyone meant so much to Him no matter who they are, or what they do . . . it was then I realized that in spite of all my weakness, He wanted to give me his love too. The love I have since received from Him has been wonderful."

A brilliant woman in Honolulu came to see me one day. The first thing she said was, "Now, tell me what God is like." So well-masked was her quiet desperation, I couldn't have chosen a better place to start than by answering her question.

"Probably not what you think He's like, and certainly not at all like many so-called Christians." She was so relieved—the tension left her and she began to relax. Our conversation continued over a period of time, during which she discovered God had not stopped loving her simply because factors in her own life and conduct made her believe He no longer cared.

People remember and hold things against themselves. People remember and hold things against each other. God, however, casts all our sins into the deepest sea, the sea of His forgetfulness. Corrie ten Boom, author and speaker, says, "And we should put up a sign, *no fishing!*" This means also, *no diving*, because once God has forgiven us it is a sin against His love for us to either bring up our own or the sins of others.

"I attended one of your recent prayer workshops," wrote M.D. of Ohio, "and left with a great blessing. We have your record album and have used it in prayer meetings where it was not only enthusiastically received but helped many to revitalize their prayer life. I never before really felt God's love. I had trusted Him as my Saviour but wondered why my heart seemed so cold. Now that I understand His love and respond to it, I'm able to share it with others. Instead of carrying my own burdens and nearly breaking under the load (because I thought God sent them) I'm beginning to turn them over to Him."

The personal experiences and discoveries just related may not convince some of you. You probably consider your problems uniquely different. But they aren't really. And even if they were, God still understands them. It's your heart, not your mind, which needs reassuring before you can solve them. When your heart is assured of God's love for you, your mind will become convinced. Make the latter receptive and assurance will follow. All it takes is your cooperation.

Making my own discovery

I once believed God loved only those who obeyed Him—that He punished all others.

As a young Christian, John 14:21 was one of the first Scripture verses I memorized. The emphasis it places upon love given as a result of obedience profoundly influenced my thinking. I reasoned that when I was good and obedient I was loved; when I was disobedient (willfully so, or accidentally so) I was rejected and unloved. Consequently I became in-

creasingly adept at rationalization. I didn't want to think of myself as unloved by God. Further, I unconsciously began to view all unbelievers as outside the realm of God's love.

The day came when I awoke to the realization that I didn't really love people at all. I thought all Christians were like myself—putting on a good "face" for the world to see. I thought all non-Christians were in a sorry state without God's love and I didn't love them either!

Paul Tournier's book, *The Meaning of Persons* (Harper, 1957), helped me to accept myself as I am. Only then did God's love become personal for me. Dr. Tournier writes: "Integration is not at all a simplification of the mind. On the contrary it is a progressive realization of one's secret propensities, and a lucid and courageous acceptance of the totality of one's being, with all its complications and contradictions" (p. 61).

A further contribution was made to my need when a Christian in all kindness asked a simple question: *For how many of your sins did Christ die?* In a flash I saw the truth: Why, for all of them—past, present, future! Before I ever sinned a single sin, Christ died for me. His death and resurrection were God's way of saying, "You're mine now. I've taken care of your guilt and your sin. That's how much I love you." Love like this assured me of acceptance as well as forgiveness. Even my Bible became a new book as I searched it with newly opened eyes.

At once I was able to accept others and love them, good or bad, Christian or non-Christian. Being loved by God and knowing what to do with sin and failure (i.e. Jesus Christ has already carried them all for me), I could with authority say to any person on

earth: *God loves you.* I could say it because I knew He loved and accepted me, and because it is true.

The day I began to more fully comprehend God's love for people I was driving an old car from California to Idaho. The catch on the hood was damaged and the wind kept pulling the hood up in the air. I stopped again and again to tie it down, but there was a refrain going on in my heart and mind all day long, over and over. It rang when I passed a farm house or a tractor crossing a half-plowed field; it sang as I passed other cars, or drove through small towns.

"I wonder if the people living there know God loves them. Do they know how much God loves them? God loves you, sir. God loves you. I wonder if you know that God loves you."

I didn't know them, would never meet them nor speak to them face-to-face. But one thing I did know: God loved each one of them. Jesus died for them. He longed for them to know this. To the extent they didn't know, they were both spiritually blind and crippled.

All the while I was driving north I literally felt God's love flowing into me and enabling me to let it pour out from my own heart in an ever-widening river of love for others.

Someone may still ask, "Does God really love the disobedient?"

What about the children you know? Aren't they both obedient and disobedient in one single day? Do parents stop loving them when they are naughty? No, and neither does God. He loves us, His children, in whatever state we may be. In every situation we can think of, His love remains constant. Read Romans 8:31-39 in the New English Bible for one of the most powerful passages in the Scriptures concerning God's love.

"Thank you," wrote a friend, "for giving me a clearer picture of Christ's love. Even when I fight and kick and try with all my might to run away, He never gives up on me. He just goes on loving me. His love is the most powerful weapon in the world. He always conquers me with love—and I can be pretty touchy sometimes! But like you, I belong to Him and I'm His forever."

Christ's life on earth revealed His love and mercy and kindness, for people who had lost their way and knew it. His severity was for those false at heart.

I have a new appreciation for the story of the prodigal son—with whom I would never have been caught associating (notice the past tense)—ever since I discovered the reason Jesus told it. Read the 15th chapter of Luke. To the religious people, who drew their skirts away from sinners and criticized Jesus for keeping such company, He told three stories. I wonder if they ever got the point!

I think I love the story of the lost sheep best of all —that foolish, not-meaning-to-get-lost sheep who just wandered and wandered until he was hopelessly confused and alone. How eager, how anxious is the shepherd! Listen! He is calling, waiting, searching until He finds it. There! He gently lifts it to His shoulders, holding it close to Himself, caressing and talking quietly until it stops trembling. See with what delight and joy He takes it home with Him!

This is what God is like.

This is how Jesus loves you.

Then Jesus tells of the lost coin, over which the owner mourned until she found it, whereupon there was great joy.

Lastly, He relates the story of the lost son— that son who purposefully and willfully got lost, but whose father was waiting, longing, hoping for his return. In these three stories there is joy and also rejoicing.

Each of these stories tells us what God is really like, because God reveals Himself in Jesus Christ. They tell us what we are like and what He intends to do about us: *love us and find us!*

Can God love us as we are?

Indeed yes! He loves us just as we are!

How can you believe it?

Be willing to change your mental attitude about Jesus Christ, and about yourself.

Be willing to consent to let Him love you even if you consider yourself unworthy.

This is belief.

This is faith.

Your response makes the gift yours.

What are you waiting for?

Make your answer honest.

Prayer is your heart
responding
to the fact of God's love.

Review and study questions

1. How does God convince people that He loves them?
2. Discuss: What God is like—His nature. The life and death of Christ as a basis for personally accepting His love.
3. Study the following Scriptures to learn that God's love and blessing are not wages which we've earned, but gifts beyond all we deserve: Ephesians 1:5, 6; 2:4-10. Romans 3:23-28; 5:5-11; 8:31-39. Matthew 5:45; 7:7-11. I Corinthians 2:9-12. I Peter 2:22-25. John 10:27-30.

4. What you put into words soon becomes truth for you. Try this experiment using the following: *God loves you. Jesus loves you. And I love you.* Tell God that whenever these words come to your mind, you will express them. Then do it. You can do it silently as you look at another. You can do it audibly if it seems right. If you don't think of it, you obviously can't do it. If you remember—know that God is there, reminding you, reaching for you, caring for you—and for others through you.

Part II. Attitudes Which Need Healing

11

Preparation for the Church Year

The church year is a wonderful way in which we recall and celebrate the mighty acts of God. It is a reminder of God's constant activity—not only God's interventions into human history, but also his grace-filled activity among us now. Through the liturgical year we realize that we are a part of God's ongoing saving and loving activity.

For many centuries the church year calendar has shaped our worship: the readings, the sermons, the hymns and other music, the color of the paraments, and the appearance of worship space. Through a rich observance of the church year, each season and festival can make its fullest impact on the assembled congregation. The church is the grateful recipient and careful guardian of the liturgical year. Faithful observance of it is both a privilege and a responsibility. In its ministry of preparation, it is important for the altar guild to study the background and significance of the various liturgical seasons and festivals. Each day of the church year has its own unique character and message, determined by the appointed lessons for the day. Close attention to these lessons enables us to celebrate meaningfully the events in the life of our Lord and in church history.

The church year consists most basically of two parts. The

first half recalls and celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. This is the festival half of the year, and it in turn has two divisions. The Christmas cycle consists of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. During this time the church focuses on the prophecies and events surrounding the incarnation. The Easter cycle is composed of the seasons of Lent and Easter, from Ash Wednesday through the Day of Pentecost. During these weeks we prepare for and observe the events surrounding our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection, and his sending of the Holy Spirit.

The second half of the church year is a more ordinary, nonfestival time. It is the season after Pentecost, known as the Time of the Church. This season begins with the Holy Trinity (First Sunday after Pentecost) and concludes with the festival of Christ the King (Last Sunday after Pentecost). During these weeks, the church concentrates on Christ's public ministry—his sermons, parables, and miracles. It is a time of growth in faith, hope, and love—and thus green paraments are used as a symbol of this growth.

Principal festivals of the church year are Easter Day, the Ascension of Our Lord, the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Trinity, Christmas Day, and the Epiphany of Our Lord. Interspersed throughout the year are lesser festivals, commemorations, days commemorating events in church history, and other occasions.

Advent

Advent consists of the four weeks before Christmas. The name of this first season of the liturgical year comes from a Latin word which means "coming." Advent focuses on this "coming" in three ways: Christ coming in the past as the baby at Bethlehem, Christ coming in the present in Word and Sacraments and in the fellowship of the church, and Christ coming again in the future at the end of time. In Advent we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming in the incarnation, but more importantly we prepare for his second coming, when he will make all things new and judge the world in righteousness.

The preferred color for Advent is blue, the color of hope. The alternate color is purple, the royal color of the coming King. Blue, however, helps make apparent the differences between Advent and Lent.

One of the themes of Advent is darkness, and it is thus appropriate to use fewer candles during these four weeks. An Advent wreath may be hung or set near the altar. The wreath is a circle with four candles, and it may be covered with greens. The candles may all be white or blue, or perhaps purple if purple paraments are used. The earlier practice of using three purple candles and one pink candle no longer reflects our calendar and lectionary. On the First Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted during the Psalm following the First Lesson. On the Second Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted prior to the service, and the second candle is lighted during the Psalm. An additional candle is thus lighted during each Sunday in Advent until all four are lighted.

Advent is a time for visual restraint and simplicity. It is appropriate to omit altar flowers during these weeks of preparation, in order to provide a marked contrast with the festivity of Christmas. When there are no flowers, vases are removed from the chancel.

Advent should not be confused with Christmas. Christmas decorations, such as a Christmas tree, should not appear during Advent.

Christmas

Christmas is the festive celebration of the Nativity of our Lord, the Word made flesh. This celebration lasts for twelve days—from Christmas Eve through Epiphany Eve.

The liturgical color for Christmas is white, symbolizing the light and purity of Christ and our great joy at his birth. White is used for the twelve days of Christmas, except for the festivals of St. Stephen (December 26) and of the Holy Innocents (December 28), when red is used in observance of their martyrdom.

Greens and wreaths may be placed in the nave and narthex,

and the chancel may be adorned with abundant poinsettias. Plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself, nor should it be obstructed by decorations. If there is sufficient room, a Christmas tree (never artificial) may be set up. The tree may be bare or decorated with white lights and chrismons. If lights are used, the tree should be made fireproof. Chrismons (taken from the word "Christ monograms") are symbols of Christ which may be made by the altar guild or other members of the parish. Decorations for Christmas should not be put up until after worship on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, because early decorating robs both Advent and Christmas of their full meaning.

Especially for Christmas Eve services, candles may be placed in windows of the nave and on the ends of pews as brilliant symbols of Christ, the Light of the world. If hand candles are distributed to worshipers, all fire safety precautions should be taken. For example, the altar guild should be certain that fire extinguishers are charged and readily accessible.

A Christmas creche may be placed near the altar, although it should not detract from the prominence of the altar itself. The figures may be carried in the entrance procession on Christmas Eve or Day and then placed in the creche. The figures of the magi should be reserved until Epiphany. During the season of Christmas, the magi may be placed on a window or table near the rear of the nave or in the narthex, as a reminder of their journey to Bethlehem and of the relationship between Christmas and Epiphany.

The altar guild needs to be prepared for large numbers of communicants at Christmas liturgies and should have adequate supplies of bread and wine on the offertory table or credence, and an ample number of purificators on the credence.

Epiphany

The Epiphany of our Lord is celebrated on January 6, marking the manifestation of Christ to the whole world. The coming of the magi to Bethlehem is reported in the gospel reading for this festival; this event may be made vivid by adding the figures of

and the [illegible] may be adorned with Christmas greenery. [illegible] however, [illegible] the altar itself. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Christmas tree [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] be placed with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the word "Christ" [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] both Advent and Christmas [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] windows of the nave and in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the Light of the world [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Christmas [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Epiphany.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Epiphany

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The [illegible] for Advent is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] between Advent and Lent.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of Advent is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the altar. [illegible] the first Sunday in Advent, the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. On the second Sunday in Advent, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] are lighted.

[illegible] Christmas [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Advent should not be [illegible] [illegible] Christmas [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Advent.

Christmas

Christmas is the [illegible] [illegible] of the Nativity of our Lord [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible].

the magi to the creche during the entrance procession. Figures of the shepherds and perhaps the animals may be removed in advance.

White is the appointed color for Epiphany, a reminder that it is a festival of light.

On Epiphany Eve or following the Epiphany Day liturgy, there may be a ceremony of the burning of the greens. This may take place in the church parking lot or another safe place. Municipal permission and/or fire protection may be necessary.

The Epiphany Season

The first and last Sundays after the Epiphany are festivals. The Second through the Eighth Sundays after the Epiphany use green paraments as a symbol of our growth in knowing Jesus as God's Son.

The Baptism of Our Lord

The First Sunday after the Epiphany is the Baptism of Our Lord, in observance of his Baptism by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River and, in that event, Jesus' designation as the Son of God. Paraments for this day are white, since it is a festival of Christ. A baptismal festival may be held on this day (see chap. 6 regarding preparations for Holy Baptism).

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

The Transfiguration of Our Lord is celebrated on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany as a climax to the season and a prelude to Lent. Paraments for the Transfiguration are white.

Ash Wednesday

Since at least the seventh century, Ash Wednesday has been observed as the first day of Lent. The name is taken from the ancient tradition of placing ashes on the foreheads of penitents. In the biblical tradition, ashes represent God's condemnation of sin; human dependence on God for life; humiliation and repentance. Ashes are a reminder of death: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Ashes for the imposition are made from palms from the

previous year's observance of the Sunday of the Passion. The palms are cut into small pieces and burned with rubbing alcohol or solid fuel firestarters. After enough has been burned, work the ash through a fine wire mesh sieve. The ash may be mixed with a small amount of oil or water and placed in a small bowl or other container for the imposition. A lavabo bowl and towel will need to be provided for cleansing the minister's hands after the imposition of ashes.

Ash Wednesday, the most penitential day of the church year, may occur between February 4 and March 10.

Paraments for Ash Wednesday may be black (the color of ashes, humiliation, and mourning) or purple (the color of penitence).

Flowers are not appropriate on Ash Wednesday, and the empty vases should also be removed from the chancel. Other festive decorations, such as banners, are also removed. From Ash Wednesday through the Saturday of Holy Week, crosses, pictures, and statues may be veiled with unbleached linen or purple fabric, as a demonstration that Lent is a time for austerity and purification.

Holy Communion is celebrated on Ash Wednesday.

Lent

Lent is the forty-day season (not including Sundays) of preparation for Easter. Traditionally, Lent has two primary themes—Baptism and penitence—both as preparation for a worthy celebration of the paschal feast. Lent does not focus on our Lord's passion; that is the focus of Holy Week.

Paraments for Lent are purple, the color of penitence.

Flowers, being a symbol of joy, may be omitted during Lent in order to help the congregation absorb the penitential character of the season. Empty vases, of course, are always removed when not in use.

The Sunday of the Passion

The first day of Holy Week is the Sunday of the Passion, also known as Palm Sunday. The mood of this day, reflecting its double name, is a mixture of triumph and tragedy. We observe

both Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem as well as his death on the cross.

Paraments are scarlet, the dark red color of blood. The alternate color is purple, the penitential color of Lent. It is good to have scarlet, however, to help distinguish Holy Week from the remainder of Lent.

Palms may replace flowers in the chancel for this day.

The altar guild is usually responsible for obtaining and preparing a sufficient quantity of palm branches for this day's procession. Several palm branches should be saved and dried for making ashes for the following year's Ash Wednesday liturgy.

The presiding minister may wear a scarlet or purple cope during the entrance rite on the Sunday of the Passion.

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday recalls the institution of the Eucharist during the Last Supper in the Upper Room. The name of the day is from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means command. It refers to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another."

Paraments for Maundy Thursday are scarlet or white. Altar flowers are appropriate and should coordinate with the color of the paraments.

Holy Communion is always celebrated on Maundy Thursday. If your parish usually uses hosts (wafers), Maundy Thursday is a day to consider using real bread in order to emphasize the meal character of this sacrament.

A foot-washing ceremony, emphasizing Jesus' servanthood, is an optional part of the Maundy Thursday liturgy. A basin, a pitcher of hot water (so that it is still warm by the time of the foot-washing), an apron, and lavabo bowl and towel for the presiding minister, and a chair and towel for each participant need to be prepared before the service.

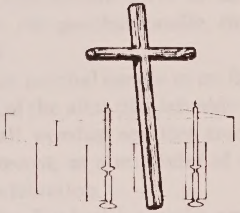
Following the Maundy Thursday liturgy, the altar is stripped as a symbolic remembrance of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers. The altar guild may be asked to assist the presiding minister by carrying the eucharistic vessels, candles, ornaments, linens, paraments, and all other furnishings into the sacristy. The sacristy should be clean and ready for all of these items. During the stripping of the altar, a cantor or the choir sings Psalm 22 and/or 88. The chancel and altar remain bare until the Easter Vigil.

Maundy Thursday is the first day of the Triduum, the three days of intense observance of the paschal mystery. Beginning with Maundy Thursday evening, the Triduum concludes Easter Evening. It is the most sacred and important time of the entire church year.

Good Friday

The original name of this day was probably "God's Friday." It is a day to celebrate the sacrifice on the cross of Christ, our Passover Lamb. The altar is bare of all linens and other furnishings. It is preferable for paraments to be omitted on Good Friday, but if they are used, they should be scarlet or black. Flowers are not used on Good Friday.

It is not Lutheran custom to celebrate Holy Communion on Good Friday; this day's focus is the cross. The altar is not used at all during the Good Friday liturgy. Instead, the rite centers at one or more reading desks.



A large rough-hewn wooden cross may be prepared for the Good Friday Liturgy in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. It may be placed in the narthex in readiness for its procession near the conclusion of the liturgy, or it may be placed in front of the altar (leaning against the altar or the Communion rail, or placed in a stand). A tall, lighted candle may be placed on a floor stand on each side of the cross.

If the service of Tenebrae is used, the altar guild will need to prepare a triangular candelabrum known as the Tenebrae hearse. Candles are extinguished individually following the reading of each Psalm, representing humankind falling away

from Christ. The paschal candle is not used in Tenebrae; it is reserved for Easter itself.

The Vigil of Easter

The Easter Vigil is the most dramatic liturgy of the year, the climax of all of our spiritual preparations during Lent and Holy Week. It is a liturgy filled with contrasts between light and darkness, freedom and bondage, life and death. The Easter Vigil liturgy consists of four parts: the Service of Light, the Service of Readings, the Service of Holy Baptism, and the Service of Holy Communion.

Easter preparations are made with white or gold paraments and flowers. Linens and ornaments that had been removed on Maundy Thursday are now replaced.

The paschal candle leads the Easter Vigil procession, and its stand should be placed in readiness near the center approach to the altar. A new paschal candle is normally acquired each year for this service. A cross, the Greek letters *alpha* and *omega*, and numerals of the current year are inscribed on the candle before the service. Traditionally the presiding minister, while doing so, says the words "Christ yesterday and today [cross]; the beginning and the end [*alpha* and *omega*]; his are all times [1] and all ages [9]; to him be glory and dominion [8], through all the ages of eternity [6]. Amen." Grains of incense are placed in readiness near the candle stand, for insertion during the Easter Proclamation.

A large fire may be built in a brazier or on the ground outside the church building, in preparation for the lighting of the paschal candle. If such a fire is not feasible, it may be struck from flint and steel.

Four to twelve biblical readings are used in the Vigil, and they should be marked in the Bible for the convenience of the lectors.

The usual preparations are made for Holy Baptism (see chap. 6). Even if Holy Baptism is not actually celebrated at the Easter

Vigil, the renewal of baptismal vows will occur, and the font should be filled with water, or a filled ewer may be placed near the font. An evergreen bough for sprinkling may be placed near the font for use during the renewal of baptismal vows.

The usual preparations are made for the Eucharist (see chap. 7). Consider using a loaf of raised bread as a symbolic reminder of our Lord's resurrection.

Easter

The festival of the Resurrection of Our Lord is the queen of all Christian festivals, and all preparations for its celebration should make its significance apparent. All of the furnishings and appointments should be thoroughly cleaned and polished. The best linens should be used, and they should be spotlessly white and newly ironed. Gold paraments may be used on Easter Day; white paraments are used during the rest of the Easter season. All paraments and vestments should be cleaned and ironed in preparation for the Easter celebration.

White or gold flowers are appropriate, and abundant Easter lilies and other flowers (including tulips, daffodils, and blooming azaleas) may be used to adorn the chancel. Flowers and plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself. All decorations should serve to direct worshipers' attention to the altar, the paschal candle, the font, and the pulpit or reading desk.

The paschal candle in its floor stand is placed near the gospel side of the altar (the left side as one faces the altar). It is lighted for all worship services from Easter Eve through the Day of Pentecost, as a reminder of the unity of these great fifty days of celebration.

The Eucharist should never be excluded from any Easter liturgy, since Easter is the paschal feast. The altar guild will need to prepare for large numbers of communicants, having adequate supplies of bread, wine, and purificators ready for use. (See chap. 7.)

Easter Day occurs between March 22 and April 25. The Easter celebration lasts for fifty days, and it is helpful to have

abundant flowers throughout the season (replacing them with fresh flowers as necessary, of course).

The Ascension of Our Lord

The festival of the Ascension is forty days after Easter, and it celebrates Christ's triumphant ascension from the Mount of Olives to heaven.

White paraments are used, and white flowers are fitting.

The paschal candle may be extinguished at the reading of the gospel on Ascension Day. However, it is better to allow the candle to burn through the Day of Pentecost. Regardless of when it is extinguished, it is moved after that service to its place near the font (where it is lighted only on days when Holy Baptism is celebrated).

The Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost occurs fifty days after Easter. It celebrates the time when the Holy Spirit descended to the believers gathered in Jerusalem. It is, therefore, a day when decorations and ceremonies should be reminders of the Spirit.

Bright red paraments are used on the Day of Pentecost, reminders of the fire of the Spirit. Red gladioli may be used for altar flowers, since their shape suggests tongues of fire. To emphasize the importance of this festival, the chancel may be adorned with red geraniums or other red flowers. They should be arranged to call attention to the altar, although plants and flowers are never placed on the mensa of the altar. Following Pentecost worship services, the geraniums may be planted on the church grounds.

Pentecost is an appropriate day for full and festive processions, and banners may be made in preparation for the procession. Bells may be attached to the banners to add a joyous note to the day. The presiding minister may wear a red cope for the Pentecost procession.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated on this festival, and the altar guild will make the usual preparations. (See chap. 7.)

Since the Day of Pentecost is an appropriate time for Holy Baptism as well as for Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation), the altar guild should seek advance instructions from the pastor. (See chap. 6 regarding Baptism, and chap. 9 regarding Confirmation preparations.)

The Season after Pentecost

Except for festivals, Sundays after Pentecost use green paraments as a reminder that this is a season of spiritual growth.

The Holy Trinity

This festival occurs on the First Sunday after Pentecost, and it celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity, one God in three persons. Paraments are white.

Reformation Day

Reformation Day occurs on October 31, but it may be observed on the Sunday preceding that date. It is a day for giving thanks for Martin Luther and the other reformers, but it also calls attention to the ongoing need for renewal of the church. Paraments are bright red.

All Saints' Day

This festival commemorates all the baptized people of God who have died in the faith. All Saints' Day is November 1, but it may be observed on the Sunday following that date. The liturgical color is white.

Thanksgiving

Although it is a civil rather than a religious holiday, it has become common for churches to hold worship services on Thanksgiving Eve or Day. The liturgical color is white. Restrained decorations of the fruits of the earth—such as grapes, sheaves of grain, ears or stalks of corn—are appropriate, but should not draw attention away from the altar.

Since the word Eucharist comes from the Greek word for thanksgiving, it is fitting to celebrate Holy Communion at

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

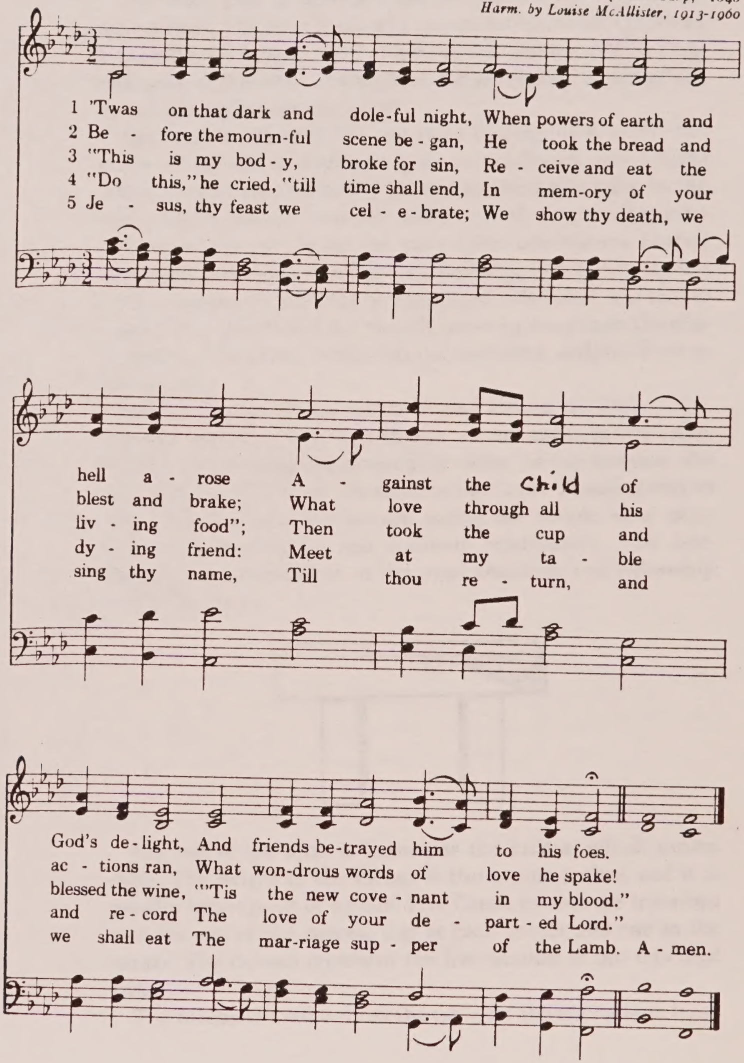
Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

'Twas on That Dark and Doleful Night

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

BOURBON L.M.
Melody, "Hesperian Harp," 1848
Harm. by Louise McAllister, 1913-1960



Holy Communion: Place and Preparation

The Holy Communion is the chief service of the church. It is known by many names, including the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the Lord's Supper. By whatever name, this sacrament is the feast of the baptized family of God, gathered around the table of the Lord. In Holy Baptism we are initiated into God's family; in Holy Communion we are sustained in that family. In Holy Baptism we are made part of the priesthood of all believers; in Holy Communion we are nourished and strengthened to carry out our priesthood of witness and service in the world. In Holy Baptism we are joined to our Lord's death and resurrection; in Holy Communion we both proclaim his death and celebrate the feast of his victory.

The altar guild has a special and privileged responsibility to prepare for this celebration which is so central to Christian worship. It is important for guild members to grow continually in the meaning of the Eucharist, as well to be thoroughly familiar with the names and use of eucharistic vessels and linens.

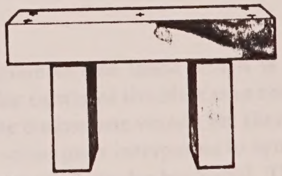
The Altar

The focal point of the worship space is the altar, the table of the Lord. More than any other furnishing, the altar symbolizes God's constant presence in his church. The altar is therefore the center of the church's life, both architecturally and liturgically.

The term altar is derived from the Latin word *alta*, which means high. The altar is usually on a raised platform known as a predella. Its height both enhances the dignity and the significance of the altar, and enables the assembled congregation to see the actions at the altar.

The altar is the table for the Holy Communion meal—the place where the eucharistic feast is celebrated and around which God's baptized family gathers to share this feast. In the early church the altar was free-standing, and the presiding minister faced the people for the eucharistic celebration. During later centuries when theology began to deteriorate, people were often considered unworthy to commune. The altar was moved against the east wall of the church, often far away from the congregation. The priest celebrated the Eucharist with his back to the people.

Luther and the Reformation helped restore the Holy Communion to the people, and finally we are again seeing altars placed in a free-standing position as tables. In this position, the ministers stand behind the altar for the Great Thanksgiving in the Holy Communion liturgy, facing the people in a more courteous, hospitable, and intimate relationship. The free-standing altar witnesses to the meal character and fellowship of the Eucharist.



The top of the altar is known as the mensa, which means table. The height of the mensa is thirty-nine inches, and it is usually rectangular or square. Five Greek crosses are inscribed into the top of the mensa, one at each corner and one in the center. The crosses represent the five wounds of our crucified Lord.

The mensa is used only as the table for the eucharistic feast.

Nothing is placed on it except altar linens, the missal stand, eucharistic vessels, and sometimes candles.

Altars which are not free-standing often have a retable, which is a small shelf above the back of the mensa. On the retable (which is sometimes also called a gradine) may be placed the altar cross, flower vases, and candles. Flower vases are not placed on the mensa itself.

Older churches often have a reredos, which is a high extension of the retable, made of carved wood or stone. When there is no reredos, an ornamental cloth known as a dossal is sometimes used as background for an altar which is not free-standing.

Altar Linens

Three linens are traditionally used to vest the altar, marking it as the table of the Lord. They are on the altar at all times, except that they are removed at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, and the altar remains bare on Good Friday.

Cerecloth

The first linen placed on the mensa (the top of the altar) is the cerecloth. When the altar is stone, the cerecloth is waxed or otherwise waterproofed to prevent dampness from staining the other linens and from damaging the various vessels. Otherwise it is simply a heavy linen and helps protect the mensa. The cerecloth measures the exact dimensions of the top of the mensa.

When the cerecloth is removed from the altar, it is rolled carefully in order to prevent wrinkles, which in a waxed fabric may be impossible to remove.

Protector Linen

Over the cerecloth is often placed a second linen, to which the altar parament(s) may be sewn. This protector linen is the same depth as the mensa and the same width as the parament.

Fair Linen

The fair linen is the most important of the altar linens, because it represents the burial linen or shroud in which our

Lord's body was wrapped after his crucifixion. The word *fair* refers to the fine quality and cleanliness of this linen. Thus, because of its symbolism and because it is very visible to the worshiping assembly, the fair linen should always be spotless and fresh. Each church will find it necessary to own at least two fair linens, so that one is always clean and ready to use. When laundered, the fair linen is never folded.

The fair linen is the same depth as the top of the mensa, but its length may vary, depending on the altar and its paraments. Often the fair linen extends over the ends of the mensa one-third or two-thirds the height of the altar, or it may be the same length as the mensa. Generous hems (as much as two inches) help the fair linen hang straight and lie flat.

Traditionally, five Greek crosses are embroidered in white on the fair linen—one in the center, and one near each corner of the mensa. The five crosses symbolize the five wounds of Christ.

It is not appropriate to place lace edges on the fair linen.

Sacramental Linens

Four additional linens are used for the celebration of the Holy Communion: the corporal, the pall, purificators, and the veil. These linens are carried in a burse.

Corporal

The corporal is a square of fine linen which is laid by an assisting minister on the center of the altar over the fair linen during the offertory. The eucharistic vessels are then set on the corporal. This linen is sometimes interpreted to symbolize the linen placed over the face of Christ for his burial. The corporal is one of the most ancient altar linens used for Christian worship.

Depending on the depth of the altar, the corporal is usually about twenty inches square. A small Greek cross is usually embroidered in white near the center front edge.

The corporal is folded and ironed inside out in thirds each way (forming nine squares), so that it can be unfolded on the

[illegible] [illegible] was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] to the [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] five [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the five [illegible] [illegible] the five [illegible] of Christ.

It is [illegible] [illegible] to place [illegible] [illegible] on the [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

Corporal

The corporal is a [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

Nothing is placed on it except altar linens, the sacred vessels, [illegible] and sometimes candles.

Altars which are not free-standing often have a retable, which is a small shelf above the back of the mensa. On the retable (which is sometimes also called a gradine) may be placed the altar cross, flower vases, and candles. Flower vases are not placed on the mensa itself.

Older churches often have a reredos, which is a wider extension of the retable, made of carved wood or stone. Where there is no reredos, an ornamental cloth known as a dossal is sometimes used as background for an altar which is not free-standing.

Altar Linens

These linens are [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the top of the altar, is [illegible] [illegible]. When the altar is [illegible] the top of the [illegible].

When the [illegible] is removed from the altar it is rolled [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible]

Fair Linen

The fair linen is the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

altar with the right side up. Thus, when it is refolded as the altar is cleared, crumbs of bread are folded into it and not dropped onto the mensa or the floor. It is carried to and from the altar in the burse. A fresh corporal is used for each celebration of the Eucharist, and each congregation needs several corporals.

Pall

Used to cover the chalice before and after Communion, the pall is a linen-covered square of stiff cardboard, aluminum, or plastic. The size of the pall is determined by the diameter of the chalice, but it is usually six to nine inches square. The top of the pall is often embroidered in white with a cross or a symbol relating to the church year.

The linen covering the pall is usually sewn as a pocket, so that the stiff lining may be removed for laundering the linen. A clean pall should always be used.

Purificators

Purificators are square linen napkins used to wipe the rim of the chalice during the distribution. The size depends on the size of the chalice, since the purificator is draped over the chalice before and after the celebration, but the size is often twelve to fifteen inches square. It is folded like the corporal, except right side out.

Several purificators are needed for each chalice for each eucharistic service. When not in use, they are kept in the burse.

Veil

Several kinds of veils may be used. The chalice veil matches the paraments and vestments in the color for the day; when this veil is used, the burse matches the veil in color and fabric.

When a whole loaf of bread is used for the Eucharist, a white linen veil—perhaps a second corporal or a large purificator—is sometimes used to cover it prior to the offertory.

Some congregations use a large white linen veil as a post-Communion cover for the vessels and elements.

Burse

Sacramental linens are carried to and from the altar in the burse, which is an envelopelike case. The burse matches the chalice veil, paraments, stole, and chasuble in the liturgical color for the day. It is constructed with two squares of cardboard, about nine inches square, each covered with linen and bound together on one side. This is covered with another piece of fabric, matching the paraments, so that the sides are pleated like bellows.

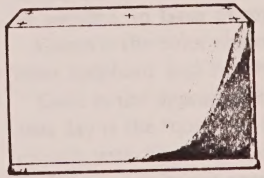
Congregations using chalice veils and burses will need a set in each liturgical color.

Paraments

Paraments adorn the altar in the appointed colors of the liturgical day or season, helping to make the altar the visual focus of the worship space. In pointing to the day or season through colors and symbols, paraments serve also devotional and educational functions. Paraments have been used since at least the fifth century A.D.

There are five types of altar paraments in use: the frontal, the Laudean frontal, the superfrontal, the antependium, and the frontlet. The type selected for a specific altar is influenced by the style of the altar, and may also vary according to the time of the church year.

A frontal covers the entire front of the altar, from the front top edge of the mensa down to the predella. This type of frontal



Frontal

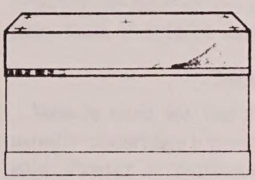
Laudean Frontal

may be attached to the protector linen, which is covered with the fair linen.

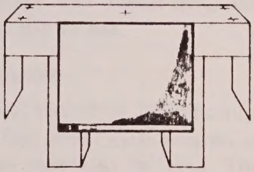
A Laudean frontal (sometimes known as a Jacobean frontal)

covers the entire altar, hanging to the predella on all four sides of a freestanding altar or the sides and front of an east-wall altar.

A superfrontal may be used alone or as a part of the frontal. It covers the length of the altar, but hangs down only ten to twelve inches from the top of the mensa.

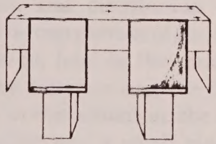


Superfrontal



Antependium

An antependium, much narrower than a frontal, covers one-third to one-half the front of the altar. It may hang all the way to the floor, but usually is made to extend over the front of the altar about three-fourths the height of the altar. It is hung in the center of the altar.



Frontlets

Frontlets are hung down the front of the altar in pairs. They are usually two to three feet wide and extend about two-thirds of the distance to the predella.

Colors

Congregations will find it useful to provide at least eight sets of paraments and vestments to accommodate the colors of the church year.

White is the color of light, gladness, purity, and joy in Christ. White is thus the liturgical color appointed for festivals of

Christ—the Annunciation, the Visitation, Christmas and its season, the Name of Jesus, the Epiphany, the Baptism of Our Lord, the Presentation, the Transfiguration, the Sundays of Easter (although gold is an alternate color for Easter Day itself), and Christ the King. White is also used for certain other festivals (such as the Holy Trinity) and commemorations, and it is the alternate color for Maundy Thursday. If seasonal symbols appear on paraments, it may be wise to have more than one white set, in order to relate each more closely to the varying times of the church year.

Bright red is the color of fire—the fire of the Holy Spirit. Red is used for the Day of Pentecost, for martyrs' days, and for certain other days celebrating events in the church, such as Reformation, ordination, and church dedications and anniversaries.

Scarlet is a hue deeper than red; scarlet is the color of blood. It is used during Holy Week—from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. The color should be selected carefully so it is not confused with the bright red used for festivals.

Purple is the penitential color of Lent. It is also the alternate color for Advent, when it is interpreted as the royal color of the coming King. In congregations where purple is used for both Lent and Advent, it will be helpful to have two different sets, with appropriate and distinctive symbols on each.

Blue is the preferred color for Advent, because it is the color of hope, a central theme of Advent. Pale and navy blues should be avoided, in favor of royal blue.

Green is the color of growth, and it is used during the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost.

Gold is the appropriate alternate color for Easter Day, since that day is the "queen of feasts," the most important day in the church year. The use of gold paraments on that one day helps to distinguish it in a special visual way from the remainder of the year.

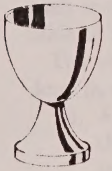
Black, the color of ashes and humiliation and mourning, is appointed for Ash Wednesday.

Missal Stand and Altar Book

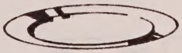
The missal stand holds the large service book (*Lutheran Book of Worship Ministers Edition*). It may be a wood or metal bookstand, or simply be a cushion on which the service book rests for the celebration of the Eucharist. The missal stand and altar book should be removed when not in use.

Eucharistic Vessels

Vessels used for the celebration of the Holy Communion usually constitute a matched set of fine metal such as silver or gold. Pewter or earthenware vessels may also be used. The appearance and material of the vessels should be worthy of the precious elements they hold—containers appropriate for the body and blood of our Lord. A minimum set of eucharistic vessels includes a chalice, paten, and flagon or cruet. If hosts (rather than a whole loaf of bread) are used, a ciborium or host box is also needed.



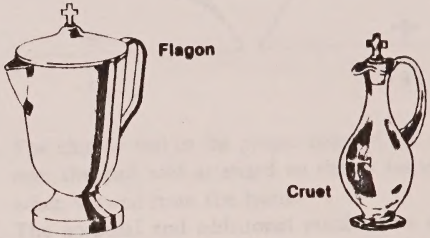
The chalice is the large cup used for the consecration and distribution of the sacramental wine. The cup portion of the chalice is attached to the base (or foot) by the stem. If the distribution is not by common cup, the chalice needs a pouring lip. In this situation, the wine is poured from the chalice into a small glass held by the communicant. Prefilled individual glasses should *never* be used. Increasingly, congregations are returning to the traditional common cup, because it is a fuller symbol of the unity we share in Christ.



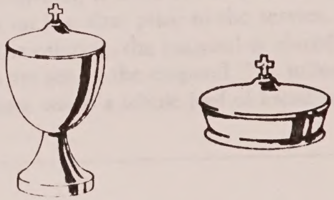
The paten is the plate used for the sacramental bread. Its size depends on the type of bread used. It is traditional practice for the paten to be set on the rim of the chalice for vesting in veil and burse. When a whole loaf of bread is used, however, another larger paten or basket is usually also needed.

A flagon or cruet is usually used to hold the wine before it is poured into the chalice. The flagon is a tall covered pitcher,

usually made of fine metal. The cruet is a glass vessel with a stopper, often topped with a cross.



When hosts (wafers) rather than a loaf of bread are used, they are kept in a ciborium or host box. A ciborium is similar to a chalice, but has a fitted lid. A host box (also known as a pyx) is a short round container with a lid.



In some congregations the presiding minister ritually cleanses his or her hands prior to the Great Thanksgiving. For this, a small dish known as a lavabo bowl is used. The water is poured over the hands from a cruet, and the hands are dried with a lavabo towel. This is a small linen towel, usually twelve by eighteen inches. It is folded lengthwise, right side out, in thirds, so that it will hang evenly over the arm of the assisting minister or acolyte.

A spoon is sometimes useful for removing foreign particles from the wine in a chalice. The bowl of a spoon made for this purpose is perforated.

usually spoken of [illegible]. [illegible] stopper, often topped with a cross.

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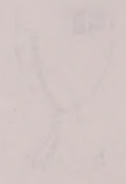

[illegible]

[illegible]

place, that all linens are freshly laundered and ironed, that all of the sacramental vessels are clean and polished, and that sufficient quantities of bread and wine are ready.

Most important in all of the preparatory work is that it be done with the reverence and good order that befit Christ's presence. Awareness of Christ's presence in the sacrament will ensure that the work is done with genuine joy and gratitude for God's grace. To prepare the Lord's table is an immense privilege!

There are various acceptable ways of arranging the vessels for the Eucharist. The method used in a given parish will be determined by the available chancel furnishings and vessels, by the pastor's preferences, and by a sense of good liturgical order.

In determining parish customs, the altar guild and the pastor must first ascertain the resources of the church. Is the credence to be used? Is the altar free-standing? Are burse and veil to be used? Is the paten a proper size to fit into the rim of the chalice? Is there an offertory procession? Is the pastor right- or left-handed? Are there assisting ministers? Answers to questions such as these will help in selecting a method for preparing the table of the Lord.

The chalice is often vested in the traditional manner. It is done in several steps:

1. A purificator folded in thirds lengthwise is placed over the mouth of the empty chalice, so that the right and left sides hang evenly over the edges of the chalice.
2. The paten is placed on top of the purificator. (If hosts rather than whole loaf are to be used, a large host may be placed on the paten.)
3. The paten is covered with the pall.

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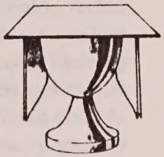

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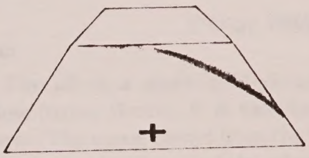

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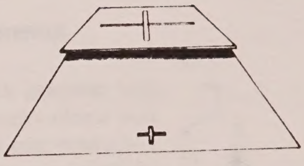

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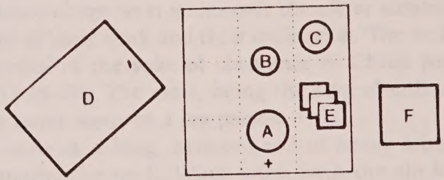
4. The chalice veil in the proper color of the day is placed over the pall and arranged so that a trapezoid is seen when viewed from the front.
5. The corporal and additional purificators are placed in the burse, which matches the veil. The burse is laid on top of the vested chalice.

It is preferable for the vested chalice (as well as flagon and other vessels) to be kept on a credence until the offering, at which time an assisting minister carries it to the altar and sets the table. However, if there is no credence, the vested chalice may be set on the altar prior to the service.

During the offering, the corporal is placed on the altar, and the vessels are set on the corporal. The following arrangement is appropriate when a whole loaf of bread is used:



A-Paten
B-Chalice
C-Flagon or Cruet
D-Missal Stand
E-Purificators
F-Burse

4
Vestments

Vestments are the distinctive garments worn by worship leaders when performing liturgical functions. In various forms vestments have been used since Old Testament times, although Christian vestments are derived largely from garments of the late Roman Empire. Vestments have both utilitarian and symbolic value.

There are several basic purposes for vestments. First, they designate particular liturgical functions. It has been almost universal in human history that people have worn particular clothes for particular functions and particular occasions. For worship leaders, the vestments place less visual emphasis on the person and greater emphasis on the liturgical role being performed, in order that attention and glory may be given to God rather than to the worship leader. Second, in their beauty, vestments reflect and witness to the beauty of God. The beauty of vestments is primarily in their texture, form, and color, rather than in any symbols sewn on them. Third, vestments reflect the continuity of Christian worship through history. Worship leaders today wear essentially the same types of vestments that have been worn since earlier centuries of the Christian church. Thus, vestments provide a visual continuity with our ancestors in the faith.

Clergy Vestments

Alb

The alb is a white ankle-length garment with close-fitting sleeves. It is the church's oldest vestment. The name comes from the Latin word *albus*, which means white, and the whiteness symbolizes the purity and light of Christ. As a vestment, the alb derives from the white tunic worn by professional persons in the ancient Roman Empire. Albs were worn by clergy for all services until the eleventh century, when the surplice (see below) began to be used for noneucharistic worship. Today the alb is usually worn for all services except Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline). When the Holy Communion is celebrated, the presiding minister usually wears a chasuble over his or her alb.

The alb is gathered at the waist by a cincture, a white rope or heavy white cord tied at the side. For clergy, the stole is placed through or tucked under the cincture. An amice, a rectangular neckcloth, has long been worn as a sort of collar with the alb. The amice originated as a means to protect the alb and other vestments from perspiration. Some new albs have collars resembling amices.

Stole

Ordained clergy wear stoles over the alb or surplice as a sign of their work and their ordination. The stole is a symbol of the yoke of obedience to Christ (see Matt. 11:28–30). The stole, being the sign of ordination, is never worn by a lay person.

The stole is a long, narrow band of heavy fabric worn around the neck. When worn with the alb for Holy Communion, the stole is crossed over the breast and tucked under or through the cincture. When worn over the surplice for other services, the stole hangs straight in front.

Stoles are worn in the appointed color for the day, and in

fabric and color they usually match the chasuble and paraments.

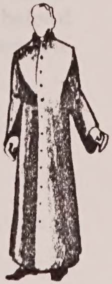
Chasuble

The chasuble is the principal vestment for the presiding minister during the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is a very full vestment worn like a poncho over the alb and stole. The fullness of the chasuble symbolizes the fact that the eucharistic meal is intended to embrace all baptized people; thus, the chasuble is a sign that the abundance of God's grace and the abundance of the eucharistic feast are intended for all God's family.

Chasubles are made of a wide variety of rich fabrics. Their primary symbolism is in their fullness and color, rather than in any symbols attached to them. It is not necessary to put symbols on symbols! The chasuble is often decorated with an orphrey, a strip of contrasting fabric in front and back—either a straight vertical pillar or the shape of a Y.

It is ideal for the chasuble to match the stole, as well as the paraments, burse, and chalice veil. The color is that appointed for the day.

Cassock



The cassock is not actually a vestment, but rather is a basic garment over which vestments are worn. Cassocks are black ankle-length garments, which are fitted from the waist up and have narrow sleeves. Cassocks usually button or snap all the way down the front.

For noneucharistic services (especially Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline), it is customary for worship leaders to wear cassock and surplice. At eucharistic services the cassock may be worn under the alb.

Surplice

The full-sleeved white vestment worn over the cassock is the surplice. Surplices are at least knee-length, and they derive from the longer and more tailored alb. The whiteness of the surplice symbolizes the purity of Christ.

The surplice is customarily worn over the cassock for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline).

Cope

The cope is essentially an ornate procession cloak or cape adapted for liturgical use. It is open in the front, fastened near the neck with a clasp known as a morse.

Copes may be worn for festive services of Morning and Evening Prayer, and for ceremonial occasions such as the procession in a wedding, funeral, ordination, installation, or confirmation.

Pectoral Cross

A pectoral cross (from the Latin word *pectus*, which means breast) is a cross on a chain worn by a bishop. It is presented during the bishop's installation as an emblem of the office.

Other Vestments

Lay assisting ministers and acolytes are also appropriately vested for their responsibility in worship leadership. Their vest-

ments are determined by those worn by the presiding minister. That is, if the presiding minister wears an alb, the assisting ministers and acolytes also wear albs. If the presiding minister wears a cassock and surplice, other participating clergy wear cassock and surplice, and lay assisting ministers and acolytes are vested in cassocks and cottas. The cotta is a waist-length version of the surplice. Crucifers usually wear albs.

Choirs, organists, and other musicians usually wear white albs or black cassocks and white cottas; robes resembling academic gowns are to be avoided because of their connotations, and persons who are not ordained do not wear stoles.

Confirmands sometimes wear white capes, which are a reminder of the white baptismal garment. Robes that are academic in style should be avoided, because they give an incorrect and inappropriate connotation to the confirmation rite—it is *not* a graduation, which is what academic garments suggest.

Caring for Vestments

The cleaning, storage, and preparation of vestments are usually the responsibility of the altar guild. Vestments should be kept clean, fresh, and ready to wear at any time, like any other good clothes for special occasions.

Most albs, surplices, and cottas are now made of washable fabrics, and may simply be laundered and pressed. Nonwashable fabrics and all other vestments require dry cleaning by professionals. Most vestments are stored on hangers, but chasubles may be laid flat in large drawers in the sacristy; it is helpful to pad the folds with tissue to avoid creases and possible damage to the fabric.

Cross

A large cross or crucifix is usually placed near the altar for worship services, though its design and placement may take various forms. The most historic form in liturgical usage is the processional cross, which has been used since the fourth century; "fixed" altar crosses date only from the seventeenth century. Because the cross or crucifix symbolizes Christ's death and resurrection for our redemption, it should be prominent in size and of quality design and construction.

If a processional cross is used, it is carried by its shaft in the entrance procession and placed in a floor standard or wall bracket in the chancel. It is also used for processions outside the church (for example, on the Sunday of the Passion and the Day of Pentecost, or at graveside). The processional cross may also be used for the gospel procession.

Otherwise, a fixed cross may be suspended from the ceiling above the altar or placed on the wall behind the altar. If the altar is not freestanding, the cross stands on the retable.

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If a processional cross [illegible] in the [illegible] and placed in a floor [illegible] or wall [illegible] in the [illegible], [illegible]. [illegible] may also be used for [illegible].

Otherwise, a [illegible] cross may be [illegible] the [illegible] above the altar or placed on the wall behind the altar [illegible] the same [illegible] as the [illegible].

Glossary

Acolyte From the Greek for "to follow"; a liturgical assistant who serves in various roles as crucifer, torchbearer, bannerbearer, bookbearer, candlelighter, and server.
Advent From the Latin for "coming"; the four weeks before Christmas which constitute the first season of the liturgical year. The color is blue or purple.
Advent Wreath A wreath with four candles, used during the four weeks of Advent.
Affirmation of Baptism Rite used for confirmation, reception of new members, and restoration to membership.
Alb Full-length white vestment used in worship since the sixth century. Usually worn with cincture.
Alms Basin Large plate in which the smaller offering places are received.
Altar Table in the chancel used for the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is the central furnishing and focus of the worship space.
Altar Antependium Parament hung in the center of the altar, covering part of the front of the altar.
Altar Rail Railing enclosing the chancel at which people stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion.
Ambo Another name for the pulpit, reading desk, or lectern.
Amice White linen cloth resembling a collar which is often worn with an alb.
Ante-Communion That portion of the Holy Communion liturgy preceding the Great Thanksgiving.
Antependium Parament for pulpit and lectern.
Apse The semicircular (or polygonal) projection or alcove at the end of the chancel.
Ascension Principal festival occurring forty days after Easter, which celebrates Christ's ascension to heaven. The color is white.
Ashes Symbol of repentance and mortality used in the Ash Wednesday liturgy; made by burning palms from previous year's Sunday of the Passion procession.
Ash Wednesday First day of Lent; occurs between February 4 and March 10. Name derives from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshipers' foreheads. The color is black or purple.

Asperges Ceremony during the renewal of baptismal vows during the Easter Vigil, in which water from the font is sprinkled over the congregation as a remembrance of their Baptism.
Assisting Minister Lay or ordained person who assists the presiding minister in worship leadership.
Banner Fabric hanging carried in processions.
Baptism The sacrament of water and the Holy Spirit, in which we are joined to Christ's death and resurrection and initiated into the church.
Baptistery The place where the baptismal font is located.
Black Liturgical color for Ash Wednesday; symbolizes ashes, repentance, and humiliation.
Blue Liturgical color for Advent; symbolizes hope.
Burse Square fabric-covered case in which the Communion linens are carried to and from the altar.
Candle Tall wax light burned during worship services; symbolic of Christ, the Light of the world.
Candlelighter Device used to light and extinguish candles.
Candlestick Ornamental base holder for candle.
Cassock Full-length black vestment worn under surplice, cotta, or alb.
Censer Vessel in which incense is burned; also called thurible.
Cerecloth First cloth placed on the mensa; usually made of wax-treated linen.
Chalice Cup used for the wine in the Holy Communion.
Chancel Elevated area in front of the nave where altar and pulpit are located.
Chasuble The principal vestment for the Holy Communion liturgy; worn like a poncho by the presiding minister over alb and stole.
Choir In traditional church architecture, the part of the chancel between the nave and the sanctuary.
Chrism Fragrant oil used for anointing in Holy Baptism.
Chrismon From the words "Christ monograms"; symbols of Christ used to decorate Christmas trees.
Chrisom White garment placed on a person after Baptism as a symbol of being clothed in the righteousness and eternal life of Christ.
Christ the King The last Sunday of the church year, which celebrates the kingship of Christ. The color is white.
Christmas Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's birth or nativity; also known as the Nativity of Our Lord. The color is white.
Ciborium Tall covered vessel which holds wafers for the Holy Communion.
Cincture Rope belt worn with an alb.
Compline From the Latin for "complete," referring to the prayers which completed the day's worship. An order for night

prayer used as the last worship service before bed. Also known as Prayer at the Close of the Day.
Confirmation Liturgical form of Affirmation of Baptism, marking the completion of a period of instruction in the Christian faith.
Cope Long cape worn by worship leader, lay or ordained, for certain processions and ceremonial occasions.
Corporal Square white linen cloth placed on the center of the mensa, on which the eucharistic vessels are placed for the celebration of the Holy Communion.
Corpus Carved figure of Christ attached to a cross; together, cross and corpus are a crucifix.
Cotta Short white vestment worn over cassock by acolytes and choir members.
Credence Shelf or table at chancel wall which holds sacramental vessels and offering plates.
Crosier Crook-shaped staff carried by a bishop.
Crucifer The person who carries the processional cross.
Crucifix Cross with a corpus attached.
Cruet Glass vessel containing wine for the Holy Communion. An additional cruet may hold water for the lavabo.
Daily Prayer The daily services of readings and prayer, including Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline).
Dalmatic Eucharistic vestment sometimes worn by an assisting minister during festive celebrations of the Holy Communion.
Dossal Fabric hanging behind and above altar.
East Wall The wall behind the altar, regardless of whether the wall is geographically to the east.
Eastwall Altar An altar attached to the wall.
Easter Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's resurrection. Easter Day (which occurs between March 22 and April 25) is known as the Resurrection of Our Lord, and the color is gold or white. The Easter season lasts for fifty days, and the color is white.
Easter Vigil Liturgy on Easter Eve which includes the lighting of the new fire and procession of the paschal candle, readings from Scripture, Holy Baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows, and Holy Communion. The color is gold or white.
Elements The earthly elements used in the celebration of the sacraments: bread and wine in Holy Communion, and water in Holy Baptism.
Epiphany Principal festival celebrated on January 6, marking the visit of the magi to Jesus and the consequent revelation of Christ to the whole world. The color is white.
Epistle Side The right side of the altar as the congregation faces it.
Eucharist From the Greek for "thanksgiving"; a name for the Holy Communion.
Evening Prayer An evening worship service of Scripture readings and prayer; also known as Vespers.

Ewer A pitcher used for carrying water to the baptismal font.
Fair Linen Top white linen cloth covering the mensa of the altar; symbolizing the winding sheet used in the burial of Christ's body.
Fall Term sometimes used for paraments on altar, pulpit, and lectern.
Flagon Pitcherlike vessel from which wine is poured into the chalice for the Holy Communion.
Font From the Latin for "fountain"; the pool or basin which holds water for Holy Baptism.
Fraction Ceremonial breaking of the bread in the Holy Communion liturgy.
Free-standing Altar An altar which is not attached to the wall, and behind which the ministers stand (facing the congregation) for the celebration of Holy Communion.
Frontal Parament which covers the entire front of the altar, from the top edge of the mensa down to the predella.
Frontlet Narrow altar parament usually hung in pairs and extending only part way to the predella.
Funeral Pall Large white cloth cover placed on the coffin when brought into the nave for the burial liturgy.
Gold Liturgical color for Easter Eve and Easter Day, giving special prominence to this most important festival of the year.
Good Friday The Friday in Holy Week which observes Christ's crucifixion and death. The chancel and altar are bare of all appointments, paraments, and linens.
Gospel Side Left side of the altar as the congregation faces it.
Gradine From the Latin for "step"; a step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as retable.
Green Liturgical color for the nonfestival seasons after Pentecost and Epiphany; symbolic of growth.
Hearse A triangular candelabrum used for Tenebrae.
Holy Trinity First Sunday after Pentecost, which celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity (one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The color is white.
Holy Week The week between the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) and Easter, which recalls the events of the last days of Christ's life. The color is scarlet or purple for Sunday through Wednesday, and scarlet or white on Maundy Thursday. No paraments are used on Good Friday.
Host Wafer, made of unleavened bread, for the Holy Communion.
Host Box Short, round, covered container which holds additional hosts for the Holy Communion. Also known as pyx.
Incense Mixture of resins for ceremonial burning, symbolic of our prayers rising to God (see Psalm 141); one of the gifts of the magi to Jesus on the Epiphany.
Intinction From the Latin for "to dip"; the practice of administer-

ing the eucharistic elements by dipping the bread or host into the wine.
Laudian Frontal A type of frontal which entirely covers all sides of a free-standing altar.
Lavabo Bowl used for cleansing the presiding minister's hands in the Holy Communion or after the imposition of ashes.
Lectern Reading stand in the chancel from which the Scripture lessons are read.
Lectionary The appointed system of Scripture lessons for the days of the church year. Also refers to the book that contains these readings.
Lector The assisting minister who reads the Scripture lessons.
Lent From the Anglo-Saxon for "spring"; the penitential forty-day season (excluding Sundays) before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Symbolic of Christ's forty days in the wilderness. Lent is traditionally the season when candidates prepare for Holy Baptism, which is celebrated at the Easter Vigil. The color is purple.
Lenten Veil Cloth used to cover crosses, pictures, and other objects during Lent.
Linens Refers to three groups of white linen cloths: altar linens (cerecloth, protector linen, and fair linen), Communion linens (corporal, pall, purificators, and veil), and other linens (credence linen, offertory table linen, lavabo towel, and baptismal towel).
Liturgy From the Greek for "the people's work"; the prescribed worship service of the church.
Lucernarium From the Latin for "light"; the service of light at the beginning of Evening Prayer.
Matins From the Latin for "morning"; morning service of Scripture reading and prayer; also known as Morning Prayer.
Maundy Thursday From the Latin for "commandment"; the Thursday in Holy Week which commemorates the institution of the Holy Communion. The color is scarlet or white.
Mensa From the Latin for "table"; the top of the altar.
Missal Altar service book.
Missal Stand Stand or cushion on the altar on which the altar service book is placed during the Holy Communion liturgy.
Morning Prayer Morning service of Scripture reading and prayer; also known as Matins.
Morse The clasp used to fasten a cope.
Narthex Entrance hall of a church building which leads to the nave.
Nave From the Latin for "ship"; the section of the church building between the narthex and the chancel, where the congregation gathers for worship.
New Fire The fire kindled on Easter Eve, used to light the paschal candle for the Easter Vigil. Symbolic of Christ's resurrected presence.
Occasional Service Liturgical rite used from time to time, including rites for confirmation, burial, marriage, healing, ordination, dedication of a church building, installation of a pastor, etc.

Offertory Table A small table near the rear of the nave which holds the bread and wine prior to the offertory.
Ordinary Those parts of the liturgy which do not change from week to week.
Orphrey Ornamental band on a chasuble or parament.
Pall Linen-covered square placed over rim of the chalice. (See also funeral pall.)
Palm Sunday See Sunday of the Passion.
Paraments Cloth hangings of various liturgical colors used to adorn the altar, pulpit, and lectern.
Paschal Candle Large white candle carried in procession during the Easter Vigil, and placed near the altar and lighted during the Easter season, symbolizing Christ's resurrected presence. At other times of the year, it is placed near the font and lighted for Holy Baptism, and placed at the head of the coffin for the burial liturgy.
Paten Plate used to hold bread during the Holy Communion liturgy.
Pectoral Cross A cross on a chain, worn around the neck by a bishop.
Pentecost From the Greek for "fiftieth day"; principal festival of the church year, occurring fifty days after Easter. Celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit to the crowd gathered in Jerusalem. The color for this festival is red.
Phos Hilaron Greek name for the canticle in Evening Prayer which begins "Joyous light of glory."
Piscina A special drain in the sacristy which goes directly into the ground, used for disposal of baptismal water and wine remaining after the Holy Communion.
Prayer at the Close of the Day Night prayer service used as the last worship before retiring for the night. Also known as Compline.
Predella Raised platform in the chancel on which the altar is placed.
Presiding Minister The ordained pastor who presides at a worship service.
Prie-dieu French term for "prayer desk"; used for Daily Prayer services, confirmation, and weddings.
Processional Cross A cross or crucifix on a tall staff used to lead processions.
Processional Torch See torch.
Propers The varying portions of the liturgy which are appointed for each day of the church year; include the Prayer of the Day, Psalm, lessons, proper verse, proper offertory, and proper preface.
Protector Linen White linen cloth placed on the mensa between the cerecloth and the fair linen, to which the parament may be attached.
Pulpit Raised reading desk in the chancel from which the gospel is read and the sermon preached.
Purificator Square linen napkin used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion.
Purple Liturgical color for Lent,

symbolizing penitence. Also the alternate color for Advent, symbolizing the royal color of the coming King.

Pyx See host box.

Red Bright red liturgical color, symbolic of the fire of the Holy Spirit. Used on the Day of Pentecost, Reformation Day, martyrs' days, and certain church occasions such as ordination and the dedication of a church building.

Reredos Carved stone or wood panel behind and above an altar.

Responsive Prayer Brief liturgical order of versicles and responses.

Retable A step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as gradine.

Rite The text and ceremonies of a liturgical worship service.

Rubric From the Latin for "red"; a direction for the proper conduct of a worship service. Rubrics are usually printed in red.

Sacrament A rite commanded by Christ which uses an earthly element as a sign of God's grace. The two sacraments are Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

Sacristy A room used for storage and preparation of items needed in worship; also used for vesting before services.

Sanctuary The section of the chancel which immediately surrounds the altar.

Sanctuary Lamp A constantly burning candle suspended from the ceiling or mounted on the chancel wall; in Roman Catholic and some Episcopal churches, symbolizes the Reserved Sacrament.

Scarlet The deep red liturgical color used from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. Symbolic of the blood of the Passion.

Sedilia Seats in the chancel for the worship leaders.

Sign of the Cross Gesture of tracing the outline of the cross with the hand, as a mark of belonging to Christ in Holy Baptism.

Spoon Perforated utensil used to remove foreign particles from wine in the chalice.

Stole Cloth band in liturgical color worn over the alb or surplice around a pastor's neck and hanging to the knees. Signifies ordination and the yoke of obedience to Christ.

Stripping of the Altar Ceremony at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, in which all appointments, linens, and paraments are removed from the altar and chancel in preparation for Good Friday. Symbolic of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers.

Sunday of the Passion The first day of Holy Week, also known as Palm Sunday. Commemorates both Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and his crucifixion. The color is scarlet or purple.

Superfrontal Short parament which hangs over the front of the mensa.

Surplice White vestment worn over the cassock; used especially for Daily Prayer services.

Tenebrae From the Latin for "darkness"; a service sometimes

used evenings during Holy Week, in which candles on a hearse are gradually extinguished.

Thurible Vessel in which incense is burned; also known as a censer.

Thurifer The person who carries the thurible.

Torch Large candle on a tall staff carried in processions.

Torchbearer The person who carries the processional torch.

Transfiguration Festival celebrated on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, recalling Christ's transfiguration on the mountain. The color is white.

Triduum The Latin for "three days"; the three sacred days from Maundy Thursday evening through Easter Evening, which together celebrate the unity of the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.

Tunicle Eucharistic vestment less ornate than a dalmatic; may be worn by the junior assisting minister at festive Holy Communion services.

Veil Cloth placed over sacramental vessels before and after the celebration of Holy Communion.

Vespers From the Latin for "evening"; an evening worship service of Scripture readings and prayer. Also known as Evening Prayer.

Vigil A liturgical service on the eve of a festival, such as the Easter Vigil.

White Liturgical color used on festivals of Christ, the weeks of Christmas and Easter, The Holy Trinity, and certain saints' days. Symbolizes joy, gladness, purity, and the light of Christ.

Glossary

Acolyte From the Greek for "to follow"; a liturgical assistant who serves in various roles as crucifer, torchbearer, bannerbearer, book-bearer, candlelighter, and server.
Advent From the Latin for "coming"; the four weeks before Christmas which constitute the first season of the liturgical year. The color is blue or purple.
Advent Wreath A wreath with four candles, used during the four weeks of Advent.
Affirmation of Baptism Rite used for confirmation, reception of new members, and restoration to membership.
Alb Full-length white vestment used in worship since the sixth century. Usually worn with cincture.
Alms Basin Large plate in which the smaller offering places are received.
Altar Table in the chancel used for the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is the central furnishing and focus of the worship space.
Altar Antependium Parament hung in the center of the altar, covering part of the front of the altar.
Altar Rail Railing enclosing the chancel at which people stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion.
Ambo Another name for the pulpit, reading desk, or lectern.
Amice White linen cloth resembling a collar which is often worn with an alb.
Ante-Communion That portion of the Holy Communion liturgy preceding the Great Thanksgiving.
Antependium Parament for pulpit and lectern.
Apse The semicircular (or polygonal) projection or alcove at the end of the chancel.
Ascension Principal festival occurring forty days after Easter, which celebrates Christ's ascension to heaven. The color is white.
Ashes Symbol of repentance and mortality used in the Ash Wednesday liturgy; made by burning palms from previous year's Sunday of the Passion procession.
Ash Wednesday First day of Lent;

occurs between February 4 and March 10. Name derives from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshipers' foreheads. The color is black or purple.
Asperges Ceremony during the renewal of baptismal vows during the Easter Vigil, in which water from the font is sprinkled over the congregation as a remembrance of their Baptism.
Assisting Minister Lay or ordained person who assists the presiding minister in worship leadership.
Banner Fabric hanging carried in processions.
Baptism The sacrament of water and the Holy Spirit, in which we are joined to Christ's death and resurrection and initiated into the church.
Baptistery The place where the baptismal font is located.
Black Liturgical color for Ash Wednesday; symbolizes ashes, repentance, and humiliation.
Blue Liturgical color for Advent; symbolizes hope.
Burse Square fabric-covered case in which the Communion linens are carried to and from the altar.
Candle Tall wax light burned during worship services; symbolic of Christ, the Light of the world.
Candlelighter Device used to light and extinguish candles.
Candlestick Ornamental base holder for candle.
Cassock Full-length black vestment worn under surplice, cotta, or alb.
Censer Vessel in which incense is burned; also called thurible.
Cerecloth First cloth placed on the mensa; usually made of wax-treated linen.
Chalice Cup used for the wine in the Holy Communion.
Chancel Elevated area in front of the nave where altar and pulpit are located.
Chasuble The principal vestment for the Holy Communion liturgy; worn like a poncho by the presiding minister over alb and stole.
Choir In traditional church architecture, the part of the chancel between the nave and the sanctuary.
Chrism Fragrant oil used for anointing in Holy Baptism.
Chrismon From the words "Christ monograms"; symbols of Christ used to decorate Christmas trees.
Chrisom White garment placed on a person after Baptism as a symbol of being clothed in the righteousness and eternal life of Christ.
Christ the King The last Sunday of the church year, which celebrates the kingship of Christ. The color is white.
Christmas Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's birth or nativity; also known as the Nativity of Our Lord. The color is white.
Ciborium Tall covered vessel which holds wafers for the Holy Communion.
Cincture Rope belt worn with an alb.
Compline From the Latin for "complete," referring to the prayers which completed the day's worship. An order for night

prayer used as the last worship service before bed. Also known as Prayer at the Close of the Day.
Confirmation Liturgical form of Affirmation of Baptism, marking the completion of a period of instruction in the Christian faith.
Cope Long cape worn by worship leader, lay or ordained, for certain processions and ceremonial occasions.
Corporal Square white linen cloth placed on the center of the mensa, on which the eucharistic vessels are placed for the celebration of the Holy Communion.
Corpus Carved figure of Christ attached to a cross; together, cross and corpus are a crucifix.
Cotta Short white vestment worn over cassock by acolytes and choir members.
Credence Shelf or table at chancel wall which holds sacramental vessels and offering plates.
Crosier Crook-shaped staff carried by a bishop.
Crucifer The person who carries the processional cross.
Crucifix Cross with a corpus attached.
Cruet Glass vessel containing wine for the Holy Communion. An additional cruet may hold water for the lavabo.
Daily Prayer The daily services of readings and prayer, including Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline).
Dalmatic Eucharistic vestment sometimes worn by an assisting minister during festive celebrations of the Holy Communion.
Dossal Fabric hanging behind and above altar.
East Wall The wall behind the altar, regardless of whether the wall is geographically to the east.
Eastwall Altar An altar attached to the wall.
Easter Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's resurrection. Easter Day (which occurs between March 22 and April 25) is known as the Resurrection of Our Lord, and the color is gold or white. The Easter season lasts for fifty days, and the color is white.
Easter Vigil Liturgy on Easter Eve which includes the lighting of the new fire and procession of the paschal candle, readings from Scripture, Holy Baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows, and Holy Communion. The color is gold or white.
Elements The earthly elements used in the celebration of the sacraments: bread and wine in Holy Communion, and water in Holy Baptism.
Epiphany Principal festival celebrated on January 6, marking the visit of the magi to Jesus and the consequent revelation of Christ to the whole world. The color is white.
Epistle Side The right side of the altar as the congregation faces it.
Eucharist From the Greek for "thanksgiving"; a name for the Holy Communion.
Evening Prayer An evening worship service of Scripture readings and prayer; also known as Vespers.

Ewer A pitcher used for carrying water to the baptismal font.
Fair Linen Top white linen cloth covering the mensa of the altar; symbolizing the winding sheet used in the burial of Christ's body.
Fall Term sometimes used for paraments on altar, pulpit, and lectern.
Flagon Pitcherlike vessel from which wine is poured into the chalice for the Holy Communion.
Font From the Latin for "fountain"; the pool or basin which holds water for Holy Baptism.
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Frontal Parament which covers the entire front of the altar, from the top edge of the mensa down to the predella.
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Gospel Side Left side of the altar as the congregation faces it.
Gradine From the Latin for "step"; a step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as retable.
Green Liturgical color for the nonfestival seasons after Pentecost and Epiphany; symbolic of growth.
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ing the eucharistic elements by dipping the bread or host into the wine.

Laudian Frontal A type of frontal which entirely covers all sides of a free-standing altar.

Lavabo Bowl used for cleansing the presiding minister's hands in the Holy Communion or after the imposition of ashes.

Lectern Reading stand in the chancel from which the Scripture lessons are read.

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Lector The assisting minister who reads the Scripture lessons.

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Mensa From the Latin for "table"; the top of the altar.

Missal Altar service book.

Missal Stand Stand or cushion on the altar on which the altar service book is placed during the Holy Communion liturgy.

Morning Prayer Morning service of Scripture reading and prayer; also known as Matins.

Morse The clasp used to fasten a cope.

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Ordinary Those parts of the liturgy which do not change from week to week.

Orphrey Ornamental band on a chasuble or parament.

Pall Linen-covered square placed over rim of the chalice. (See also funeral pall.)

Palm Sunday See Sunday of the Passion.

Paraments Cloth hangings of various liturgical colors used to adorn the altar, pulpit, and lectern.

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Phos Hilaron Greek name for the canticle in Evening Prayer which begins "Joyous light of glory."

Piscina A special drain in the sacristy which goes directly into the ground, used for disposal of baptismal water and wine remaining after the Holy Communion.

Prayer at the Close of the Day Night prayer service used as the last worship before retiring for the night. Also known as Compline.

Predella Raised platform in the chancel on which the altar is placed.

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Prie-dieu French term for "prayer desk"; used for Daily Prayer services, confirmation, and weddings.

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Processional Torch See torch.

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Purificator Square linen napkin used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion.

Purple Liturgical color for Lent,

symbolizing penitence. Also the alternate color for Advent, symbolizing the royal color of the coming King.
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Reredos Carved stone or wood panel behind and above an altar.
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Retable A step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as gradine.
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Sedilia Seats in the chancel for the worship leaders.
Sign of the Cross Gesture of tracing the outline of the cross with the hand, as a mark of belonging to Christ in Holy Baptism.
Spoon Perforated utensil used to remove foreign particles from wine in the chalice.
Stole Cloth band in liturgical color worn over the alb or surplice around a pastor's neck and hanging to the knees. Signifies ordination and the yoke of obedience to Christ.
Stripping of the Altar Ceremony at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, in which all appointments, linens, and paraments are removed from the altar and chancel in preparation for Good Friday. Symbolic of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers.
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